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## Events of the Week.

THE first Conscription Bill ever presented to Parliament was outlined by the Prime Minister on Wednesday, January 5th. Mr. Asquith's main object seemed to be to minimize its scope and importance. It was limited to the unattested single men (number unknown) and to the redemption of his pledge to the married, which was given to avert the breakdown of the Derby campaign. The pledge came in force when it was made clear that more than a negligible minority of single men had abstained from attesting. Under the Bill, all unattested single men of military age will be treated as if they had attested. No penalties are affixed, but the new conscripts will be treated as deserters if they fail to present themselves when called up, and in the last resort could, of course, be shot. Such service is to be limited to the period of the war, Ireland is excluded, and there are to be many exceptions and exemptions. Among the former are the whole body of the clergy, Conformist and Nonconformist. The latter are to include workers in the national interest, those with absolute dependents or who are sole supports of a parent, the physically unfit, and conscientious objectors to "combatant" service. No express conscience clause is proposed, but Quakers and others can seek relief from local tribunals, with two further chances of appeal. Territorials enlisting for home defence are also turned into conscripts for foreign service.

THE case for the Bill was brilliantly contested by Sir John Simon, who has resigned the Home Secretaryship mainly on the ground that it was a case of Verdict First and Trial Afterwards, and that the Prime Minister could not possibly say that the time for the redemption of his pledge had come before he had had time to analyze the character and quality of the bachelor abstentionists. The deductions from the Derby estimate of 651,000 unstarred non-attesting single men must, as he showed, be of a sweeping character. His criticisms revealed the greatest looseness and carelessness of method, and pointed clearly to a miserable remnant of numbers, in no sense worthy of a breach with free service. They clearly shook the "friendlies" in the Labor Party, who expressed their doubts in the person of Mr. Hodge, and strengthened the Liberal and Radical opposition, while Mr. Redmond refused Irish support even for the first reading. Mr. Law cleverly argued the inevitability of the Bill on the lines of the Asquith pledge, and dangerously reduced the Premier's doctrine of a "general consent" to the Bill to one of acquiescence of the minority in the decision of the majority of the nation. Is not this faithless as well as tyrannical treatment?

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THE second day's debate was overshadowed by the immensely important fact that the Labor Conference of the same day decided to throw over the official resolution, which, though opposing conscription, left the Labor members free to vote as they pleased, in favor of an uncompromising amendment pledging the Conference to "use every means in its power" to "oppose" forcible enlistment. This was carried on a card vote by 1,715,000 to 934,000. This grave decision, which every student of the Labor movement must have anticipated, involved the immediate resignation of Mr. Henderson, Mr. Brace, and Mr. Roberts, the three Labor members who gave the Coalition much of its representative character.

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IN the House the ablest speeches were those of Mr. John Ward, who represented the enthusiasm of armies raised by voluntaryism rather than the case for destroying it, and Mr. Balfour, who, having done his best to keep the Cabinet to free service and failed, now characteristically argues that our national character remains unchanged in the act of breaking with it. The Bill, he now says, is a mere "occasional" measure. This, again, represents the effort of the defeated voluntaryists like the Prime Minister and Mr. Balfour, to prevent a general resort to conscription. The first reading, which merely provides for the tabling of a Bill, and does not even carry its principle, was opposed by 105 members against 403—majority 298. The minority included 60 Nationalists, 34 Liberals, and 11 members of the Labor Party. We note that the London correspondent of the "Manchester Guardian" points out that should the Bill become law, persons and newspapers advocating a return to freedom, or holding meetings with that object, or publishing accounts of them, or even speaking privately in favor of such a policy, are liable to prosecution.

[January 8, 1916.]

LORD DERBY's report was issued on Tuesday as a White Paper, and its principal points may be set forth as follows:—

Number of men enlisted, attested, or rejected	2,950,514
,,    Single men presenting themselves	1,150,000
,,    Married   ,,        ,,        ,,	1,679,263
,,    Single   ,,        remaining    ...    ...	1,029,231
,,    Married   ,,        ,,        ...    ...	1,152,947

The last two figures are purely conjectural. It is clear that rather more married men have attested than single; but then the issue was not the same. The single men offered themselves, knowing full well that whoever escaped, they would not; the married always knew that the single would first be drawn upon. There is another point worthy of note, since this invidious distinction has been made between married and single. It is clear that if the married were to offer themselves *equally* with the single, they must attest in greater numbers, since for every twenty-one single men of military age at the initiation of the Derby scheme, there were twenty-eight married.

HENCE, if the number of married men attesting is higher, the number of married men remaining is also higher. The report states that 103,000 single men have enlisted as against 112,431 married; but the total of those enlisted is considerably higher; and, as Sir John Simon pointed out, the late recruits were only put into the categories "married" and "single" on a rough War Office estimate, which assigned the majority to the married for no discoverable reason. There were 840,000 single men attested, of whom 527,933 were unstarred. By deducting the badged and reserved, indispensables and unfit, these were reduced to 343,386 available. The 1,344,979 married attested similarly come down to 487,676; making a gross total available for military service of 831,062.

THE number of single men remaining is given as 1,029,231; but this the report finally admits to be inaccurate, for it states at the end that there were about 120,000 late-comers. If half of these belonged to the single class, the total remaining would come down to about 960,000, and hence the number of unstarred single men must be similarly reduced to about 590,000. These, again, are subject to heavy reductions, as Sir John Simon pointed out, for the numbers were founded upon the Registration Act of August 15, and that, having no reference to conscription, included classes which no measure of military compulsion could properly draw upon. Even so, Lord Derby is singularly disingenuous in saying that 651,160 unstarred single men were unaccounted for. For in his main report he subtracts 40 per cent. of the unexamined as unfit; he adds to this a further deduction of 10 per cent. as badged or reserved, and another 10 per cent. as indispensable. To these very serious deductions, which, on his own showing, must be made, an addition should be made for a fact which Sir John Simon alone seems to have grasped. This is that we are now nearing the bottom of the basket, where the unfit, indispensable, excepted, and exempted classes must lie much thicker than amidst the earlier drafts.

THE Russian operations in Galicia and Bukovina are now more completely disclosed, though it is still impossible to say whether the Austro-Germans anticipated a Russian attack through Rumania and determined to forestall it by striking in Galicia, or whether they merely got in the first blow against a carefully planned Russian offensive in this area. The latter seems the more

probable, since it is not consonant with Russian military practice to announce their plans to the world as the projected offensive against Bulgaria was reported. The Austro-Germans, resuming their old plan, struck for the southern section of the Riga-Rovno railway, and for the important junction of Tarnopol. But the impetus of their attack soon came to nothing, and the Russian operations became disclosed. Three well-defined areas stand out as the scene of Russian operations. In the South they struck from the Dniester to the Rumanian frontier, the focus of the battles being about Toporoutz. They have pressed out their line until it dominates, if it does not include, Czernowitz, the capital of Bukovina. Here Mackensen was reported to have taken up his headquarters, and the city is now said to be evacuated by the Austro-Germans, who are still holding to the bridgehead at Uscietchko. The fall of this town would give almost the whole of Bukovina into Russian hands.

FARTHER north the Russians struck along the middle Sereth below Tarnopol to below Tchartkoff, and the Austrians and Germans were driven, on a front of some twenty miles, to the Strypa, where their resistance is focussed about the bridgeheads at Burkanoff and Butchatch. About eighty miles farther north still, the Russians are fighting astride two railways which converge upon Kovel. The northernmost advance is being pressed along the edge of the Pripet Marshes, astride the Sarny-Kovel line. The Styry, which in this region is the advanced bastion of Kovel, has been cleared, and the Russians are well to the West. The southern advance is being directed along the Rovno-Kovel railway. Kovel has now been strongly fortified, and turned into a vast dépôt for military stores and reserves. The threat of the Russian advance is most serious in this quarter, though it stands to win more immediate results farther south.

FROM north to south the battle line stretches some 200 miles, from the Pripet to the Rumanian frontier. The Austro-German lines were hardening and taking the form they have already assumed now for some time in France and Belgium. The fighting has therefore been of a most bitter character, and the Hungarian Honved regiments are bearing themselves more bravely than ever before. Few prisoners are being taken, and infantry engagements tend to develop into hand-to-hand encounters. With the exception of the advance in Bukovina, which is largely political in aim, the operations are being pressed along railway lines. It is the prevalence of such communications which peculiarly recommends Galicia to the Russian Staff. Czernowitz has changed hands four times already, and if it has been evacuated the news will soon be known in Bukarest, for whose sake the operations were initiated. It is too soon to say whether Ivanoff will be able to maintain his advance against Mackensen; but in the new round of these familiar duellists, though Mackensen got in the first blow, the first successes have fallen to Ivanoff. Already the Russian offensive has cast a blight on the Balkan operations, and some of the German newspapers begin to express anxiety even for the Egyptian campaign.

A WHITE PAPER issued on Tuesday contains a memorandum of the German Government on the sinking of a German submarine last August by the British auxiliary cruiser "Baralong," and Sir Edward Grey's comments upon it. The "Baralong" came up with the submarine as it was in the act of sinking the liner "Nicosian," and the German memorandum states, on the sworn testimony of several members of the crew of

the "Nicosian" and one of the crew of the "Baralong" that the captain of the latter, after sinking the submarine, gave orders to fire on the German sailors who had jumped into the sea, and sent men to kill those who had escaped on the "Nicosian." The German Government, upon this evidence, call for the trial of the commander and crew for murder.

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SIR EDWARD GREY expresses his willingness to submit to trial before an impartial court this, the only charge made against British seamen since the war began, as well as three incidents, involving German submarines, which happened almost at the same time as the "Baralong" affair. These were the sinking of the "Arabic" without warning, with the loss of forty-seven non-combatants, the shelling of the stranded E 13 in neutral waters, and the shelling of the crew of the steamer "Ruel" while in their boats. The affidavits which support the German case differ in essential detail; and, even if the incident were as alleged, the attack upon sailors fresh from a gross breach of sea-law cannot be compared with the normal German campaign of brutality conducted in cold blood against combatants and non-combatants alike. This does not prevent us from wishing with Sir Edward Grey for a trial of the case, and for strict justice in its judgment.

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THE P. & O. liner "Persia" was torpedoed by an enemy submarine without warning off the coast of Crete on December 30th at 1.10 p.m., and sank in five minutes. It was carrying about 350 passengers and crew, and nearly 200 were lost. Among those lost was a number of women and at least three American citizens, one of them, Mr. McNeely, being the United States Consul at Aden. So suddenly did the vessel sink that none of the starboard boats could be launched, and those who were lost were probably trapped in the saloon. Some of those who escaped were taken into boats and rescued by one of H.M. ships after a few hours. Others, like Lord Montagu of Beaulieu, were picked up after clinging to wreckage or overturned boats for many hours. These survivors suffered from the misdeeds of enemy submarines by being deliberately shunned as traps by British and neutral steamers, and it was only when hope seemed gone that Lord Montagu, after thirty-two hours' immersion, was picked up at night.

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THE sinking of the "Persia" accentuates the difficulty which America half-creates for herself. Austria-Hungary had to change her tone with regard to the "Ancona," but it is hard to understand how even the American administration can now condone this fair-words-and-false-deeds policy. An official statement has been issued from White House that the President and Secretary of State are investigating the case and will take action as soon as the full facts are known. But if the "action" consists in another exchange of Notes, Austria will obviously drag things on till a rupture seems certain and then apologize—till the next time. We suppose the American protests serve the purpose of putting it upon record that all this hideous brutality is wrong; but they produce no change in the enemy's conduct of the war. Why should they?

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WE doubt whether a much graver offence against liberty was ever committed by the authors of the Six Acts than that recorded in the House of Commons on Tuesday evening. It will be remembered that the Press Bureau issued an order warning the newspapers to confine their notice of Mr. Lloyd George's proceedings at Glasgow to the official report which was to be provided

by itself. The report appeared. It was immediately denounced as inaccurate and misleading, and private reports (which reached us in common with other journals) declared that not only were the more significant incidents in Mr. George's reception omitted or slurred, but that the total effect was misrepresented. The "Forward," a local Socialist newspaper, published a full report of these matters, obviously based on shorthand notes. The issues of this paper were seized by the police. Questioned in the House of Commons, Mr. Tennant admitted that the seizure was at the instance of the Ministry of Munitions, and he and Mr. George added, "haltingly," as the "Manchester Guardian" says, that the cause was an attempt to obstruct the Munitions Act. We perceived no such attempt in the copy we have perused; only an extremely frank and unflattering report of Mr. George's reception. Is a Minister to use the powers of an Act of Parliament designed to protect the nation to secure himself against criticism? This was the custom of George III., which really seems to have been much less drastic than the innovation of George VI.

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AN able memorandum by the Admiralty on the methods of our blockade against Germany comes opportunely as an answer to the violent demands of extremists, who call for impossibly drastic action which no conceivable reading of international law could justify. The memorandum opens with a description of the normal methods which were open to us when the war started—the capture of German ships (which ceased in the first few days of the war, since none put to sea), and the stoppage of contraband, absolute and conditional. The difficulty of dealing with contraband of both classes (1) is that of establishing an enemy destination, or of proving that conditional contraband is destined for the enemy Government; and (2) drawing up a list of contraband goods. The effects produced by operations on these lines were admittedly limited, and goods in reduced but appreciable quantities continued to reach Germany through neutral ports. The illegalities and atrocities of the German submarine campaign enabled us to go further, and by way of reprisal to declare a modified blockade of Germany.

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THE gains by this change of method were that all difficulty about contraband ceased. Under a blockade, every import of the enemy is stopped, whatever its character, and whether it be consigned to the Army or to civilians. The difficulty, however, of proving that goods consigned to neutral ports like Copenhagen and Rotterdam were really destined, after a "continuous voyage," to reach Germany, was still very great. No secret service could be infallible, and delays irksome to neutral shipping occurred, while all the cargo in these neutral bottoms was overhauled in our ports. These delays led, early in the case of Holland, and later in that of Denmark, to the formation of trading trusts of neutral merchants, who guaranteed that no goods imported by them should reach the enemy directly or indirectly. This was a gain, but the leakage was still considerable. The plan now in fashion is that of "rationing," i.e., the placing of the neutral country on a restricted allowance of all the more critical imports (rubber, cotton, wool, copper, &c.), so that it shall not introduce more than its normal consumption in peace-time warrants. Even this plan, as the memorandum admits, is not quite watertight; for the neutral, attracted by high prices, may stint himself in order to sell to Germany. The quantity which may leak by such means is, however, necessarily very small. The evidence of great scarcity in Germany of cotton, fats, and rubber is overwhelming.

## Politics and Affairs.

### THE FRUITS OF CONSCRIPTION.

THE Prime Minister must, we think, have added to the regretful speech in which he introduced the first Conscription Bill ever presented to the British people, a rueful mental rehearsal of his earlier warnings against a measure unblessed by national consent. Where stands unity to-day? Within a few hours of its introduction this Bill has divided the Liberal Party. It has divided the Government, and, with Mr. Henderson's resignation, stripped it of its character of a national administration. It has divided the Labor movement. It has divided Ireland, both within her own borders and in her relationship with Great Britain. Above all, it threatens to sunder, to adulterate, to confuse the purpose born of indignation, pity, and the national peril under which the whole community sprang to arms in August, 1914. While it introduces into our voluntary armies an element foreign to their life and spirit, it presents to the industrial system the most imminent danger of all. We need not confine our discussion of conscription to the disingenuous plan which represents the minimum of what Liberal voluntaryists in the Cabinet can offer, or Tory Compulsionists (plus Mr. Lloyd George) accept. The Bill is a mere half-way house to the compulsory enlistment of married and single alike. The "Morning Post" already treats it as a halting-place, and calls for a speedy march to the real goal of universal military service. Service in a fighting army being essentially one of physical vigor, it is not possible to defend an act which puts the bachelor of forty into the fighting line and keeps the married man of twenty out of it. But neither can military conscription, even in the more logical form of an equal application to the whole body of males of military age and good physical capacity, stand alone. It is the prelude to industrial conscription also. The greater the drain on the workers for war service, the harder will it be to maintain the national industries, and the time must come when employers will resent the resulting demands for higher wages than they choose, or think they can afford, to grant. What power of resistance will the workman possess from the moment when his employer can say to him that if he does not think the wage bargain good enough, he can resign his privilege as a "starred" man, and report himself to the nearest recruiting station? Alternatives there will be none. The moment the unmarried worker of military age is deprived of the protection of his star, the State can lay its hands on him. Under such conditions, a war begun by a free and willing people may thus be maintained by a form of the press-gang more intolerable than our forefathers knew, and entirely inconsistent with organized democracy.

Such are the perils and losses of the hour. What are its gains? If all is confused in Liberalism, which furnished a majority of the Coalition Cabinet, in Parliament, where it also held the mastery, in Nationalist Ireland, and in labor, without whose aid and sympathy the war cannot be won, does the triumph of

the doctrinaire, the sensational journalist, the partisan, the reckless Boulangism in which Mr. Lloyd George has finally sunk his democracy, adequately compensate the nation? We think not. Nor when we turn to the Army, is the adverse balance redressed. We make elsewhere as careful an analysis as possible of the arithmetical guesswork which Lord Derby calls a report. As far as we can see, the Government can hardly hope to obtain 100,000 capable soldiers from the residuum of unmarried men, and we see that a strong conscriptionist organ comes to the same conclusion. We call that a very "negligible minority." If it is answered that to this must be added the 487,000 married men who must remain outside the army until the single men have been brought in, we say that this exclusion rests absolutely on whether it has or has not been proved, *on the examination of claims of exemption*, that a considerable body of single men have improperly held out against enlistment, and that this condition has never been observed. The "pledge" was not allowed to mature. The Prime Minister was in too great a hurry, or the "Times" and his conscriptionist colleagues pressed him too hard. Mr. Asquith may have allowed the Derby scheme to become an instrument for keeping men out of the Army instead of bringing them in, but that is no reason for turning the British Constitution upside down. Drag the nation high and drag it low, it is clear that conscription on the lines now proposed will add a ridiculously small body of single men outside those who have freely offered themselves. The conscription of the unattested married men might bring in 100,000 more. Then, unless our industries are to be ravaged, its contribution would have to cease.

But when we have dragged in the last reserves of physical timidity and moral aversion, and have drilled them at greater expense and with infinitely smaller profit than their willing comrades—who constitute the flower as well as the mass of our armies—how nearer shall we be to the grand aim of winning the war? Our Army is always an expensive organization, far more so than the three great armies of our Allies whom we help to sustain in the field. The new conscriptionist wing will be the most expensive and the least efficient of all. It gives no element of military value, and supplies no serious increment of numbers. It establishes no great principle of equality of sacrifice; it only adds a new anomaly and eccentricity of service to those which exist to-day. As Sir John Simon well said, we have sold our birthright of freedom without even getting a square meal of pottage in return. Above all this throwing of the weakest part of our population into the ranks of the Army represents no addition to the common stock of Allied strength, which is the real unit, but only a change in the form of our contribution, and a change for the worse. Our soldiers are dear, and, though of admirable quality, are handicapped by improvised and amateurish training. The Allied armies, which our finances in large measure sustain, are comparatively cheap and subject to more highly-skilled professional guidance. In the act, therefore, of running up our jerry-built military house, (and, incidentally, neglecting the Navy, which is the foundation of our strength) we are taking bricks from the more solid structure

of the Allies. Have we ever put to them the question whether they want to see extra British battalions in the field at the price of losing or cutting down our subsidies to their own? We cannot doubt what the answer would be; and it represents an absolutely vital calculation in the arithmetic of the war.

For these reasons we cannot follow the Prime Minister's elaborate demonstrations of the smallness of his treaty with the evil dominion against which the British people went out to war. There lies the grand fault of our statesmen. They cannot rise to a conception of the greatness of the issue and of the people who strive for it. Hardly indeed do they think of the people at all. Mr. Balfour asked the House of Commons to remember that we were living in a world of fact and reality. Yes, but ideas live in and govern that world. "The success or the failure of a campaign," said a great modern Frenchman in one of the best books on war ever written, "depends on an innumerable number of moral and intellectual forces, and an innumerable number of material forces." You cannot defeat and dishearten those spiritual allies without weakening the arm of flesh which they wield. In the same spirit of sceptical indifference to what the people are and think, Mr. Asquith treats his "pledge" as something made to his Cabinet or to a selected body of the enlisted. But in essentials it was a pledge to the nation at large, a pledge to maintain voluntary service. The pledge is abandoned in haste and without adequate cause; and when the instinct of Liberalism and democracy arises to vindicate it in Parliament, in the Press, on the Labor platform, a threat is made to resort to a disorderly and essentially unconstitutional *plébiscite*. This is a second attack on the doctrine of consent, to which we should still like to count the Prime Minister as an adherent. But if the reckless counsellor who chiefly promotes it should prevail, and a General Election follow the Government's inability to defend in Parliament the betrayal of freedom concerted in Cabinet, the issue would not then be the conduct of the war, for all parties are united on it. It would be an issue of prejudice against a single class—and therefore of division in the community. It would therefore seem a monstrous thing to use party funds to crush the spirit and principles of Liberalism, and we decline to believe that Mr. Asquith would be a party to such perfidy. But if it comes, we counsel the friends of liberty to go out and meet it. Let them organize, accumulate funds, support their candidates, appeal to public opinion. They might be beaten, but the promise of the future would be theirs, no less than the cause which makes the war worth the winning, nor would their effort come to an end before it had stamped out the evil act of last Tuesday from all but the memories of the British peoples.

#### WHERE IS THE SLACKER?

THE report of Lord Derby, issued on Tuesday, constitutes an amazing epitome of the strength and weakness of democracy. There could be no better witness to the depth of selflessness democracy can call forth. It is also, we

fear, an enduring record of the trifling and disingenuousness of a democratic administration faced with the ultimate realities of life and death. Above all, by what it contains, as by what it omits or implies, it furnishes a complete condemnation of those who would wreck the State in a hunt after one of the cherished bogies of the hour—the "Slacker." A round six millions of men either serving or willing to serve—some 2 per cent. above the total maximum recruitment of a conscript country—if this be not a triumphant vindication of voluntaryism, we fail to imagine what test can be required. The "Westminster Gazette" smooths its habitual desertion of great causes in temporary eclipse with the assurance that there remain 651,160 "single men who will have to be fetched." Such writers learn nothing, for they will see nothing beyond the weak fears and shallow lures of the hour. Yet even the "Westminster" should have the candor to recognize that the Derby report reduces its 527,933 unstarred single men to 343,386 available for service. The fact that a Compulsion Bill has been framed upon the findings of this report is an entire justification of those who have insisted from the beginning that the advocates of compulsion are determined to force its principle and the regimentation it represents into the Statute Book, at whatever cost and despite any reason or resistance. For since only two-thirds of the unstarred attested under the Derby scheme are even reputed to be available, then similarly the 651,160 unstarred single men who have not attested should at once be reduced to about 420,000. These numbers would include all the conscientious objectors and those who have dependents, as well as a good proportion of those rejected under the pre-Derby régime, the priests and clergy, the weak-minded, the criminals released from gaol, and a number of the mercantile marine. In the face of such obvious deductions, one would have thought that even the most hardened compulsionist would begin to think that we were coming to the end of the basket. So far from this being the case, he has jumped to the opposite conclusion, that we have still serried ranks of slackers to draw upon.

Before we examine the matter of the report in detail, there is one point which needs to be emphasized. The starring of industries and the issue of reserved lists thoroughly confused the Derby scheme. In semi-rural and rural areas it does not seem to have been generally known who were starred or who were not, and this inequality, with a sense of unfairness which it fostered, militated strongly against the success of the appeal in those districts. Similarly, the issue of lists of reserved trades and the expectation of other trades that they would be included in such lists, kept back numbers of those who would probably have enrolled. These two points are mentioned by Lord Derby, and anyone conversant with the working of the scheme knows how large a number is covered by one or the other. Men were told by their employers that they were starred or reserved, sometimes when there was very little chance of the trades they represented being listed. Lord Derby states that since his first report was written, further and lengthy lists of "reserved" occupations have been issued, which, of course, he has not allowed for, and

which clearly add another to the many charges on the residuum of unattested men of military age.

When we begin the business of examining the untapped residuum, we touch upon defects of a far more vital character. The total of single men of military age who have not attested is given as 1,029,231. This is incorrect, on Lord Derby's own showing. There were "belated returns," and some earlier ones which increase the total attested, enlisted, and rejected, by 121,251. Take half of these as single, and deduct the number from the total given in the report, and we have a corrected total of 968,606. Of these, 378,071 are starred men. That is to say, they alone were starred when Lord Derby made his report. But the total is probably higher still, certainly high enough to cover any starred men in the number deducted for late comers. The number of unstarred single men therefore becomes 590,535. This number is still formidable; but it is subject to a number of deductions foreseen by Lord Derby, though not allowed for by him, and to one neither foreseen nor allowed for. We recruited some 3,000,000 men in the era before Lord Derby became director of recruiting. They were clearly not all that offered themselves. Many were rejected as unfit, both for sound military reasons such as slight physical defects, and on account of organic disease. No allowance for these, no mention of them, is made in the Derby return. From that report it appears that some 20 per cent. of those attesting were rejected as medically unfit. If we make the same allowance (and it is not abnormal) for the pre-Derby era, we have to find somewhere in the unattested residuum a place for 750,000 men. As more single men volunteered in the early stages of the war, let us divide this total between the single and married, in inverse proportion to the numbers remaining at the initiation of the Derby scheme. This would give us 420,000 rejected. Perhaps 20 per cent. are now in reserved trades. Thus from the total of 590,535—not 651,160, as Lord Derby wrongly asserts—we must deduct 336,000. We have, therefore, 254,535 remaining. Deduct 10 per cent. badged and reserved, as in the Derby report, and the total is 229,082. Deduct 15 per cent. as "indispensable," which is 5 per cent. above the deduction made by Lord Derby, and we obtain 184,720. We may assume that half of these are unfit for military service. This is only 10 per cent. above the estimate of Lord Derby, and it is justified by the known increase in the percentage of unfitness as the last strata of the population of military age are touched. The total available for military service would then be **92,360**, including the clergy, conscientious objectors, criminals, imbeciles and weak-minded, and part of the mercantile marine. The available married men with similar deductions come to about the same total. The main fact which is not realized, is that we cannot "star" over a million and a half men, and include them in our available recruitment. Further, there is a certain proportion of men of military age in every nation who are unfit for military service. If we put this at 25 per cent. over the range of the forty-six classes we are within the mark. Deducting this from, say, 8,000,000 of military age, we arrive at a maximum number of efficient of six millions.

Deduct one and a half millions for starred industries, and we get 4,500,000, which is about the greatest possible number we could recruit as a conscript country. As we have "badged," "reserved," and indispensable classes, besides conscientious objectors and the rest, it is easy to see why the Derby scheme should do no more than bring the availables to within 600,000 of our maximum.

But the plain fact is this, that while Germany cannot put more than from 10·7 per cent. to 11·4 per cent. of her population into the field, and France only about 10·0 per cent., we, without conscription, have had 14·2 per cent. of the male population of military age spontaneously offering their services. This is a fact which history will remember. It is a demonstrable teaching of history that little over 10 per cent. of the total population can ever be placed in the field. If we neglect Ireland, we have little short of the proportions actually available. And because it is possible that a handful more may be obtained, the order has gone forth to tinge our peculiar glory with shame and to prejudice our hope of victory by rending the country into factions.

#### THE CONSCRIPTION OF WEALTH.

CONSCRIPTION is an official policy to-day, as the result of an effort, ingenious but artificial, to bisect the nation. In our normal life men are seldom ranged in opposite camps according as they are married or single. It is not a customary or inevitable cleavage, and without the sedulous prompting of the press, we seriously question whether it would ever have occurred to the more spirited of the younger married men to insist that the middle-aged and unwarlike bachelors should first be forced to face the cannon. It may be a plausible demand, when once attention is directed to it.

There is, to our thinking, a cleavage and bisection which is much more natural and axiomatic, and if as yet no newspapers give it currency or make for it an artificial resonance of headlines, it is none the less sufficiently present to the mind of the masses. It is the distinction between the soldier whom duty calls to man the trenches on a subsistence wage, with the risk of wounds, disablement, and death, and the man whose easier destiny it is to maintain the credit or to provide the armament of the nation by working profitably at home. So long as we maintain voluntary service, there is no legitimate sense of grievance, though the distinction may be sharp. Each is a free agent, and each has his own appropriate reward. The soldier alone is the hero of these two, and his, if he survives, will be the exaltation of to-day, the gratitude of children, and the proud conscience of old age. The shipper and the munition firm director, who have beyond all question executed indispensable and invaluable tasks, escape the glory and enjoy the dividends. No reproach lies at their door. On the contrary, they have been urged by every sane and responsible statesman to continue their work. The country would be ruined and the war irreparably lost if, in some mad impulse, the responsible directors of our essential trades, shipping, mining, metal-work, woollen manufacture, and the rest,

were to-morrow to insist on flocking to the colors. True as this is from the standpoint of national economy, the slightly invidious distinction between the fate of these two classes remains to the human gaze of the plain man, even under voluntary service. From the moment that conscription is adopted, it becomes intolerable, and it will in the end be impossible to maintain.

There is nothing to be said in principle for compulsion except the thing which all its advocates have said for it since the early days of this war. It does, in principle, promise to secure equality of sacrifice and equality of risk. In a primitive country like Serbia, the promise is fulfilled. Within the limits of military age (much higher limits than we shall dream of enforcing) every fit man enters the ranks and faces the bullets. A few civil officials are exempted, but they, too, are national servants, working for a fixed and usually exiguous salary. There are more numerous exemptions in France and Germany. In our country alone must the exceptions rise to a figure which dissipates the whole illusive promise of equal sacrifice. When one realizes that of the single men still remaining at home one-third are "starred," and that of the remainder (omitting the unfit) 15 per cent. must be deducted as "reserved," and another 20 per cent. as "indispensable," it is clear that only a minority can be required to face the risks and privations of military service. To talk of equality of sacrifice in these conditions is a mockery.

But it is not the mere inequality of risk that tells. The men who shirk risk or even count it, when they are clear that the issue calls for sacrifice, are not very numerous, and the real resistance to compulsion will come, not from those who shrink from losing their lives, but from those who scruple to take life. The issue is not so much that half our manhood will face death while the other half is safely employed; it is that an appreciable proportion of those who remain behind are very profitably employed. Their status becomes everyone's concern from the moment that the decision is taken to "mobilize" in one way or another the whole manhood of the country. It is the duty of every shipper, colliery-owner, and export merchant to maintain the trade, the credit, and the transport of the country to the utmost of his capacity. We hold ourselves most strongly that it is so, and we hold, moreover, that the neglect or under-estimation of this duty may mean peril or ruin to the Allied cause. But it is no part of this duty to make exceptional, or even normal, profits. The Glasgow workmen who call for the "nationalization" of the munitions industry, are so moderate that they state only a fragment of the real theoretical case. If we mean what we say when we contend that a man who is making (say) textiles for export is serving the nation and performing a task as essential as fighting; if, further, he is excused all risk on this account, then it ought to follow that directors, foremen, and workers engaged in such a task are rewarded much as officers, sergeants, and men are rewarded in the Army. Short of this, there is no approach to equality of sacrifice. This theoretical demand is, of course, impossible of realization. You cannot improvise a system of Socialism in the midst of war, and if you could it would not be worth doing for the limited time that the war can last. That answer

leaves the problem standing. If you cannot nationalize you can at least reduce the flagrant inequality of sacrifice. There are ways of conscripting wealth as well as men.

In a half-hearted fashion the principle has been recognized. A limit has been set to war-profits of 10 per cent. over the average of peace. It is very doubtful if such a levy on excessive profits can be enforced, but at the best it makes no approach to a recognition of the real and clamant injustice. The young professional man who is conscripted will often have to break up his home from mere inability to pay his rent, or else run into debt, or quarter his dependents on his elder relatives. His neighbor, whose business is "starred," not only does as well as usual, but makes his extra profit. The businesses which directly supply the State are regulated and controlled on this rather generous basis. The more numerous businesses which contribute indirectly to our national credit and maintain the flow of exports, escape all regulation and draw their profits freely. A voluntary system and an individualist State may survive such anomalies. A State which adopts the principle of compulsory national service will ignore them at its peril, and create a revolutionary temper in the process.

There was little ground for class bitterness in the early phases of the war. The landed class could hardly have given its young men more generously if it had been compelled, and the Universities were emptied even more drastically than the workshops and the mines. The anomaly began with the Derby scheme, and it will become intolerable with conscription. There is only one expedient for reducing this contrast. It cannot be obliterated. No tax, however heavily it reduces the income of the "reserved" or "indispensable" rich man, will ever balance the inequality of sacrifice which robs the conscript's home of its breadwinner or brings him back maimed or blind. The utmost that can be done is to abolish, while the war lasts, the spectacle of offensive luxury, to shear away the superfluity of great incomes, and prevent the accumulation of private fortunes by the conduct of trades which are starred as national services. Mr. Montagu's estimate that half the national income must be taken in taxes was not excessive, and the way to take it must clearly be by a tax so steeply graduated that incomes over a certain level will practically disappear. That is necessary, apart from all social considerations, if we mean to win the war. It is necessary, also, if we wish to avoid from our Allies in this war the reproach which cynical people addressed to the England of Pitt's day, that it had allotted to itself by far the least risky and the most profitable part in the tasks of the coalition. It is inevitable that we should finance the Entente in this war also, and maintain its credit and its trade. But it is neither inevitable nor proper that our moneyed class should grow rich by this service. What is due to our own necessity and to our Allies will be imposed upon us by an irresistible moral logic, if conscription is enforced. Equality of sacrifices it never can impose. It threatens, unless we devise a conscription of wealth, to divide the nation by the most intolerable of all cleavages, an election arbitrary and yet compulsory between those who draw profit in safety and those who must add peril to loss.

## THE ROAD TO RUIN.

LITTLE attention was paid in this country to the passage in the German Chancellor's recent speech in which he boasted that Germany had lured Great Britain away from her traditional policy into vast schemes of military warfare on the Continent. No credit was due to Germany for an action taken by us with eyes open and with clear intent. But the self-gratulation of Bethmann-Hollweg was not unreasonable. For events now make it manifest that the abandonment of our successful economy of national defence, resting ultimately upon a refusal to fritter away on Continental armies resources best employed for other modes of fighting, is entangling us in more and more dangerous commitments. To hold the seas, to finance our Continental allies, and to put upon the field a small, skilled, and highly serviceable army, this has for centuries been held to be our true war economy. The enormous growth of our modern wealth has, of course, enabled us without excessive risk to increase the size of our expeditionary forces, as well as the amount of subsidies to our Allies. But that increase should be strictly subordinate to the two more vital services. Even as late as last May, this economy was powerfully expounded by Mr. Lloyd George:—

"What service can Britain render? She can keep command of the seas for the Allies. She could, of course, maintain a great Army, putting the whole of her population into it, exactly as the Continental countries have done. The third service which she can render is the main burden of financing the Allied countries in their necessary purchases for carrying on the war, and also help the Allies with the manufacture of ammunition and equipment of war. Britain can do the first, she can do the third, but she can only do the second within limits if she is to do the first and third."

This was Mr. George, as Chancellor of the Exchequer. Unfortunately, Mr. George, Minister of Munitions, hastened to scrap his sound financial principles, plunging in "men and munitions," while money is left to take care of itself. Conscription is the first fruit of this insane committal to an excessive size of army. For it is not merely the voluntary principle that has been jettisoned this week, but the true essence of Britain's fighting power. In a striking article in the current "Fortnightly Review," Mr. Archibald Hurd reinforces the lesson. "In proportion as we have developed our military strength—withdrawing millions of men from industry, and also producing munitions in vast quantities—we have reduced the sum total of the aid which, in other circumstances, we could render to the Allies as an industrial and financial Power." It is not a question of whether, by "dilution of labor" or other measures, we can put so many more men into our fighting-line and furnish them with the materials of war, but whether, by keeping these men in ordinary industrial employment, we cannot put a still larger force of men and munitions in the fighting-line of our Allies. Mr. Hurd frankly denounces our reckless increase of armies as "the abuse of sea-power." By that he signifies that we have relied upon the command of the sea, which our unconquerable fleet secures for us, to plunge into illimitable dependence upon foreign countries for supplies of goods, munitions, and other necessities of military and

civil life. Relying upon these external resources, the State has become "the generous paymaster of a larger proportion of the population than was ever in State employment before in any country, has increased the consumption of large sections of the population, and has decreased the production of wealth by the nation."

Now our financiers realize very clearly the growing peril of this course in its bearing upon our trade balance and our exchanges. But we are convinced that the general body of the nation is not yet aware of the disastrous consequences which another year of war will disclose, if the departments go on with their unchecked and unrelated expenditure. When, at its opening, we recognized the likelihood that the war would be a long struggle, we experienced a just confidence in the superiority of our ultimate resources of wealth over those of Germany. When our fleet had sealed up Germany from overseas intercourse, we were convinced that victory was only a question of time. But the loss of the sea has forced our enemies to the rigorous economies and the elaborate organization of industry by which they seem to have mastered the problem of economic self-sufficiency.

Possession of the sea has plunged us into military extravagance, and tempted our people into keeping up their old wasteful habits of consumption. It is, therefore, evident that we are throwing away the huge and apparently determinant advantage we held at the beginning of the war. The persistent refusal of the Government to present to the House of Commons and the nation any real explanation of the method by which any further increase of our land forces can be supported is hardly intelligible except as the result of a silent conviction that a supreme short effort at an early date will bring a successful decision of the war. Neither Mr. McKenna, nor any Chancellor who may succeed him, would dare to stand up and attempt to argue that, for a war continued for two years or even one year longer, this country can find the means to support the large new drafts of men our Conscriptionists are demanding, to pay America for the proportionately enlarged supplies we shall require from her, and to continue the profuse advances of money which our Allies will need. We are aware that Conscriptionists dare not at present give the answer that is in their minds, and that will be on their lips when they think the fetters of compulsion are firmly fixed. Their answer to all fears lest our industries should be inadequate to the enlarged demands is Industrial Conscription. "Down with the obstructive trade unionism which limits overwork and hampers national mobilization of labor! Away with the right to strike or to select employment or employer! Bring in by legal compulsion from their homes the millions of women who are capable of industrial service! Let down still further the standard of education, and pour children into the industrial pot!" Such is the Prussianism which is lurking in the near background of our Governmental policy, as pernicious as its original, and still more perilous.

We warn the country that the course to which the Government, or a strong section of it, seems determined to commit it, contains two faults, either of which is likely to bring our cause to ruin. The first is this gamble for

victory by methods that involve a progressive weakening of our fighting powers. The second is the conviction that the working-classes of this country are so near akin in spirit to the submissive well-drilled dupes of the Prussian bureaucracy that they will consent without a murmur or a question to place their lives and liberties of daily action at the free disposal of improvised officials and committees, wielding powers of martial law? We warn the Government to make no mistake in either of these matters. By taking in all the "slack" and waste of our industrial system in its normal working, it may be possible to put three million men into the fighting forces of this country. But when all the "slack" is taken up, an attempt to add even another quarter of a million will cause a disorganization and stoppage of some vital industries. So also with the encroachments upon personal liberty. Patriotism in the emergency of war will induce and has induced our workers to accept many interferences with their rights. If they had been consulted more freely, and had been deceived less frequently, they would have gone further still in the willing surrender of these liberties. But there will always be a limit, and it is right that there should be, beyond which they will trust no Government to encroach. They have been told the nation is fighting a war for liberty. That is true. But it means a war, not merely to escape the dominion of Germany, but to preserve those vital qualities which distinguish our governmental system from that of Germany. They will insist on continuing this fight, and will refuse to surrender to the soul of Germany while continuing to fight the body. That would indeed be *propter pugnam pugnandi perdere causas*.

## A London Diary.

LONDON, FRIDAY.

LAST week there were fears lest the conscriptionist *coup* would carry all before it. To-day a very different spirit is abroad. The root of it is the anger and disgust at the way in which a great liberty of the people has been not so much torn as stolen from them. Conscription for a great emergency the country would have borne, for it has borne everything (including the incompetence of its governors) with patience, just as its young manhood has dared everything with ardour. But conscription after six millions of citizens have offered themselves for armed service (*i.e.*, about 2 per cent. more of the population than conscript Germany has taken or can take)—conscription under a scheme twisted so as to turn it into a plan, not for getting volunteer recruits into the Army, but for keeping them out so as to make room for the application of force; conscription by a newspaper dodge in statistics; conscription by a silly libel on a class; conscription as a cloak for Ministerial misdirection—this is too much. It is easy to discover the bias of the Derby report; the recklessness of its guess-work arithmetic; the amateurish incompleteness of the whole process. But I am bound to say many

deplore that the Prime Minister should choose to honor an unexpired pledge to the conscriptionists, and to let an overdue pledge to the nation go by. For what was the substance of the Asquith pledge? It was made to the nation, and its promise was to stick to voluntaryism as long as the nation itself came forward to sustain it. Is not this pledge fulfilled? I do not find any serious calculation of the residuum of competent unattested single men available for soldiering which brings it out at 200,000 men. Most of them place it nearer 100,000 or below it. How can so gigantic a change stand on such a basis as this?

ANYTHING is credible in these times, but surely the threat of a punitive dissolution touches the limits of belief. By whom is the penalty to be decreed? Not by the Crown, because the Crown, in such a matter, acts on the advice of the Prime Minister, and the Prime Minister happens to be the author of a Bill by which, in the interests of the nation, the life of the present Parliament is to be extended for nine more months. But the House of Lords, it is suggested, by declining to pass this very Bill, may bring about an unconstitutional dissolution by strictly constitutional methods. Certainly a tempting situation, but one also which is clearly not devoid of danger for those who might seek to carry the paradox into practice. In any case, it is essential that a sharp distinction should be drawn between action of this kind by the Lords and a dissolution invoked by the Ministry. What the Ministry may do is one thing—in the event of a dissolution that one thing would presumably be an appeal to the country against an unsympathetic House of Commons. On the other hand, a dissolution forced by the Lords would be a challenge to the Government as well as to the Commons, since it is inconceivable that Ministers, with the power of dissolution in their own hands, would actually connive with the Lords in a furtive encroachment on their prerogative. For those as well as for other reasons I think it may be assumed that a good deal—probably most—of the current dissolution talk is intended to intimidate not so much the back-benches as some elements on the Treasury bench itself.

SIR JOHN SIMON's resignation was quietly done; few, I imagine, even of his intimate friends, knew that it was pending. But it has produced a very great effect. People have got so accustomed to the sinking of all principle in the arts of Government that they did not count greatly on the breaking away of this cautious, highly-tempered "intellectual." Nevertheless, this is the second sacrifice exacted in the course of a short and brilliant career. The first was the Woolsack, which Sir John could have reached more quickly, I suppose, than any lawyer of his generation or of the generation before him. Now all eyes are bent on him. He is easily the ablest of the lawyer-debaters; he has distinction of mind and presence; and now he will be brought into contact with a mass of emotion and belief which must greatly expand his temperament and influence his career. If Mr. McKenna and Mr. Runciman join him, there will be a nucleus Government round which these elements will quickly grow.

DESTRUCTIVE analysis never did its work more neatly or more completely than in Sir John Simon's urbane yet unflinching exposure of the deceptive implications, inherent fallacies, and slovenly gaps and loose ends of the Derby statistics. I suppose the Prime Minister must have guessed what was coming when he airily invited the House beforehand not to be led away by an over-scrupulous concern for the "nicely calculated less or more"—surely an excessively cavalier method of treating the basis and justification of the Government's conscription fabric. By general consent—if that once hackneyed but now famous phrase may still be used to imply a certain degree of unanimity—little was left of the fabric when the ex-Home Secretary had done with it, and perhaps almost as little of the prestige of its architects. Some of the incidental passages of the speech—I have particularly in mind the shrewd, wholly unexpected, and pertinent thrusts at the upholders of the Ulster Covenant in their latest incarnation—had the quality of at once enlivening and strengthening the main thread of an argument which, if it failed to influence votes, certainly touched up some distinguished consciences.

A GREAT many politicians who do not agree with Mr. Bowles, and do not accept his rather excessive claims against neutral countries, will be glad to see him member for St. George's, Hanover Square. Mr. Bowles is one of the men who ought not to be out of Parliament at such a juncture as this. He is, in the first place, one of the most brilliant speakers and writers of our time. He is, in the second place, a master of maritime lore, and, in this hour of neglect of the Navy, has an original and penetrating knowledge of its problems. And, in the third place, he is an independent thinker and actor, and one of the needs of the hour is to pluck Parliament from its subservience to the Executive, and make it again a power in criticism and policy. I hope, therefore, that the independent voters in St. George's, Hanover Square, will see to it that Mr. Bowles goes in, even over so strong a candidate as Sir George Reid.

A CLOSE and competent observer of the Labor Conference writes me as follows:—

"The anti-conscription resolution passed by the Trade Union Congress last September was one of those ambiguous statements which are drawn up so as to secure general consent. There is no such ambiguity about the resolution passed by the great Labor Conference this week; for it pledges Labor, not only to hostility, but also to resistance to any measure of compulsion. In September the mild official resolution carried the day; on Thursday the strongest amendment put forward carried the Conference by an enormous majority. This is a highly significant fact. Men and movements, however, do not live by resolutions alone; and the most important fact about Thursday's Conference was the feeling of the delegates. Anti-war feeling there was little or none; against conscription the vast majority of the delegates were united. Throughout the Conference the tide of feeling rose, especially during the speech of Mr. Arthur Henderson, whose plea for the acceptance of the Government proposals carried no conviction. Mr. Henderson started well; but two or three false steps soon lost him his control of the audience, and he was soon subject to a running fire of interruption. After his discomfiture, the rejection of the amendment urging

full acceptance of the Government Bill was certain, and none was surprised when, despite the advocacy of Mr. John Hill, it was defeated by 2,121,000 votes to 541,000—nearly four to one. The choice then lay between the official resolution, which was non-committal, and the drastic amendment moved by Mr. Bellamy of the National Union of Railwaymen, and backed by an imposing list of trade unions and other labor bodies. Mr. Bellamy's fine outspoken speech very greatly helped his side. 'No matter what the result of the Derby figures,' he said, 'we are not going to lend our voice or vote to any measure of compulsion: we are prepared to take every possible means to oppose.' And he struck the note of the Conference when he said: 'Conscription is not being introduced for 300,000 men, but to put round the necks of the working class a chain so strong that it will be able effectively to hold them all the time.'"

Let me add that no one who knows the mind of Labor can doubt that the decision of the Conference represents the mind of the rank and file of the trade unions. Labor sees in any form of conscription the end of all its liberties.

IN THESE days life passes so hurriedly and feverishly that it seems a slight thing to chronicle that in one week there has gone from us the greatest of living actors and the most brilliant of Irish journalists. Salvini and Mrs. Crawford were both of a great age; they had passed out of this generation's knowledge. Yet I can see Salvini in "Othello," and tremble at what the mind's eye calls up about him—see him rising as Iago's first poisoned dart reached his breast, and hear the roar of fury that followed when the wound began to tear it. It was not for some years afterwards, when I saw the Scilian players, that I realized where the root of Salvini's method lay, and by that time that kind of dramatic expression had largely yielded to the finer sensibilities of the Duse type of the Latin artist. Yet humanity seems to have shrunk a little in the interval, and lost in virility and grandeur, as one compares even Irving with the great Italian. Salvini's acting was, I suppose, a little too brutal, too animal, but you could not dissociate the word noble from it and from the glorious personality behind it.

MRS. CRAWFORD'S brilliant day also lay in the past, and I sigh to think of the years that have passed since, as a boy, I first saw her seated with her husband in a famous *café* near the Bourse, writing their article for the next issue of the "Daily News." She, of course, was the real correspondent; hers was the genius for politics, for words, for constructing an imaginative picture of French life (who has done it since?), and withal for putting her hopes and ideas on to paper. She was Irish, and she became very French in method. She interpreted politics through personalities, and as she was handsome, witty, and brilliant, and could write with malice (in the French sense) as well as with color and spirit, she became a great force in French Republican politics. I suppose Gambetta was her hero and her greatest intimate, but her articles in "Truth," and the "Daily News" were galleries of contemporary portraits, painted in a thousand lights and attitudes, and not merely in the respectable ones. Such history must, I suppose, be blurred with fiction. Mrs. Crawford knew many secrets, and she had a lively imagination. She blended both in her thousand sketches of the kings, queens, politicians, butterflies, and demi-reps of nineteenth-century Europe.

She had two excellent guides through the maze, her genuine love of democracy and a sterling honesty of mind.

REAL heroes are rare enough. I should call the late Sir George Robertson one of them. If anyone doubts it, let him read his story of the siege of Chitral, and guess from that shrinking but beautiful narrative the part he played in it. There was nothing left for him but to carry his grace and charm of character and bearing into the little life of a member of Parliament. He made, I suppose, no great show; his real gifts were obscured. I remember following with him in a Brighton hotel the moving records of the French retreat to the Marne, and admiring his sure touch, its pre-knowledge of the meaning of each backward step in the Allied armies. He lacked the kind of push that elbows its way along in the House of Commons, yet he always spoke with knowledge and distinction, and would have made (for example) an excellent representative of the War Office. But no use was found for him. I suppose he was of too fine a metal.

▲ WAYFARER.

## Life and Letters.

### OF ME AND IT.

RECENT tendencies and episodes have made us realize as never before the separateness of me and it. Though the slight importance, almost the non-existence of "it," might be imagined by a casual observer a cardinal tenet of our religion, there are many things, such as the great reverence we pay to an empty body to make such an observer modify his judgment. Pagans often do better by mixing up with the empty body such undoubtedly foreign objects as the horse and the armor of the vanished warrior. Royal persons and editors show their essential humility by speaking of "our beard" or "our pen," meaning thereby, "the beard that is upon my body" or "the pen that I and my body use." Common people have drifted into the way of regarding their bodies as essential parts of themselves. The demand for the sacrifice of thousands and even millions of bodies in the interests of our souls has pulled us up short, and gone far towards rectifying this popular blunder.

I and it have come to the conclusion that it is such as we are, and not ego tightly soldered to new and shining bodies, that should be used first in this strange and novel sacrifice. The cry of "single men first," in so far as it means "young men first," is *prima focie* suspect because it is raised by the old men. Not by the moderately old men on the verge of military age; they, realizing the justice of the case offer themselves freely. It is the still older people, the so-called wise ones who control our destinies from the safe retreat of Parliament or newspaper offices, who cry out for the blood of those just entering upon life's innings. They are far more tender with our still more material possessions. It was our old battleships that we pushed into the Dardanelles and risked and lost, while we kept the young and lusty "Queen Elizabeth" out of harm's way; our old cruisers that do patrol work in the North Sea; the young ones that are kept in reserve for a greater day. Why not use first the men of a somewhat obsolete pattern, who have

done their work (good work, let us hope) for the State, and who freely offer themselves for this dangerous job, and let some few of the young ones stay a little longer?

It is impossible that we should (I and it) be suspected of feeling virtuous over what we have done. When we possessed a brand new bicycle, we would not have lent it to a friend or a brother for the world. If he had not knocked the enamel off and tarnished the nickel, he would at least have taken away some of the clean, smooth, silent running that is the soul of a perfect bicycle. Now that the bicycle is old, though, we trust, still sound and good for a few thousand more miles, there is but little merit in lending it for a good purpose. We have had our joy of it. If it should come to an eternal smash, we know pretty well now, as we did not some time ago, and as the possessors of new bicycles commonly do not know, where we can get a new one. The sooner the old one gets broken, the sooner we get the new one.

Very little having been offered, we cannot be surprised if the agent of Moloch meets us with rather less than a "Thank you for nothing." If the volunteer has his value, who can doubt that we are really a volunteer? No one has tried to decorate us with white feathers, no one has persuaded us to join the Army by discharging us from some other occupation. That is true of about the upper half of the forty-six groups of the newest of all the armies. One great inducement alone appealed to them in a greater degree than to the others of the great snowstorm that overwhelmed the Derby organizers, the desire to save the country from the inherently bad thing, and from the disgrace of a resort to conscription. If we have not done that, our little sacrifice has been somewhat in vain; we are more than half-inclined to regret the step we took. So far from caring whether they got our service or not, the authorities actually fling insult at us after injury by pretending that we have stipulated that the young ones who have not the wish to go shall be made to go before our service is accepted.

It is not perfectly easy to face these cannon-fodder merchants, when the goods we have to offer are not clear above reproach. The body of a young Hercules they accept with alacrity, almost with effusion, but when the case is less, they not only look the gift-horse in the mouth, but sound it and measure it all over, passing it for acceptance with disdain or shaming it with rejection. We can sympathize with the many thousands who preferred to avoid the risk of this final insult; we should certainly not desire to wear a badge that signified that we had offered and been rejected. It would have been a blow like a sickness to us if "it" had been found weak of heart or in some other way unsuitable for a campaign, and therefore not very suitable for ordinary life.

They did not make it easier for us by openly showing that they thought it a bore to be wasting a fine day in swearing in obstacles to the great goal of conscription. They insisted on thinking we were there for some other purpose. When we mentioned Group 46, they pretended that we had said age forty-six, and said they could not take us. They sent us to the doctor without the necessary paper, and by some chance the doctor failed to keep his appointment. They closed the office, sticking up the notice, faithfully unfaithful, "Back at 1.30." As we had come a long way, and could not wait about for hours, all the screwing up of courage was wasted for that day and many days. We thought the matter over again, and as nearly as possible decided that we had no business in the war, and had better remain at home.

But when the last day came, after which the opportunity would be gone, we marched down to the forlorn assault. All was at sixes and sevens. If we had no

paper, neither had anyone else. The collective courage became ours. In a naked world we were well clothed. So many eyes were worse than ours were superb. A complete set of teeth was almost unique. We enjoyed the stubborn "I am forty" of another man asked for his correct age in years, months, weeks, and days. Our age to a decade, and the month of our birth was enough for a clerk in a hurry. Everyone's blood was up. If only the few timid ones who stayed at home had been there, the whole nation would have enlisted.

And what now? Here we are perched away at the top of Group 46. Four groups have been called up for the first month. The whole of us should last twelve months. They say, however, that we are mostly cowards, who refuse to go, till the Quakers who never fight are made to fight, till single sons supporting their mothers are torn away, till youths constitutionally fearful are sent shuddering to the shambles. A neighbor has a son who stays awake all night, moaning at the fear of bloody and horrible death. Many an oldish married man volunteered to save such as him from the terror that we felt at his age and have almost outlived. They say that their promise to us condemns these others, even though they may be worthless in battle. There was just as much a promise that if the Derby scheme was a success there would be no conscription. It was three times a success. Yet, for the sake of two hundred thousand non-fighters the Government commits suicide, with no Government to follow, and the cause for which we enlisted is lost. Surely I and it had better have left the thing alone.

## D.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF STYLE.

"It is in the highest degree unphilosophic," said de Quincey, defining an aesthetic canon of Wordsworth's, "to call language or diction 'the dress of thoughts' . . . He would call it 'the incarnation of thoughts.'" That seems to us as pertinent an epigram on style as you are likely to find among the myriad expository theories of the art of writing between the Elizabethan Puttenham and Arnold. Since Arnold, all discussion upon the subject seems to have come to an end. Now, the whole difficulty of the subject is that it is impracticable ever to arrive at an absolute definition of style which will embrace all the fluctuations of the mind in artistic expression. Wordsworth, for instance, adopted a classical style to embody a romantic inspiration; Byron, on the other hand, wrote undiluted romance with a polemical ideal of the eighteenth-century paramount in his purpose. The fact is that it is futile not only to isolate style and to identify it with manner as a separate constituent in expression, but to uphold an abstract formula to be adjusted to all conditions, all personalities, and all periods of letters. If, therefore, there is an imperative need for a classical style in modern literature, it is only as a relative antidote against certain evils, which, if we do not bring literature to its senses, will destroy it finally as a living force in the formation of national psychology.

The new style, then, to achieve its ends must, first and foremost, be a protest, a reaction, an indirect criticism. In that factor alone lies the embryo of a definition. There is no time to play games with words when those words are designed to express something at once salutary and antipathetic to the conventional order. The normal result is that literary graces become subsidiary to a more virile artistic purpose. Nor is it in the least likely that such a style, if it is to avoid artificiality,

will merely return to a naïve and primitive phraseology. On the contrary, in order to realize its full stature of development, to cultivate its most rational and appropriate resources, it may even be more liable to an intricate, antithetical orientation than any other. But that does not in any way throw it into a Renaissance perspective. The Elizabethan method was an end in itself; a new style will be a means to an end. Elizabethan conceits were a leisurely, almost a *dilettante* diversion. Literary grace, literary surprise, literary passion was the sole motive. The age was young and extraordinarily ready to enjoy itself, with the devouring receptivity of youth, over the most brilliant or the most tedious and irrelevant of literary artifices. It was patriotic, that is to say, satisfied with itself, and it was uniform, that is to say, uncritical, and an easy prey to the prevailing fashions. And, above all, it had or thought it had, plenty of time. It grasped at its new treasures of imagination with greedy fingers, but possessed them at its leisure. Its conceits, therefore, were highly mannered, highly ingenious, highly complex, and in their unblushing orthodoxy, entirely sufficient unto themselves. Far otherwise will it be with any potential recovery of style in the future. The paradox of revolt, its significance greatly accentuated, will throw away its cup-and-ball exercises for a more concentrated, a more relevant and dynamic contest. It will evolve from a staff wreathed in vine leaves to a weapon. But not a club or a boomerang or a battle-axe. For the times themselves are a kind of paradox, a conjunction of incongruous elements into a surface harmony. The conditions of modern journalism, therefore, and of the modern, intensified struggle for existence, demand the more packed, the more elliptical and immediately suggestive expression of thought.

But this is only to cross the frontiers of the subject. A specific disease demands a specific medicine, and you cannot prescribe the one without diagnosing the other. The danger of the extinction of contemporary literature lies not in the neglect, but in the deliberate exploitation of style to serve ulterior and interested motives. Style is not a derelict ship; on the contrary, it has been seized, torn from its moorings, and navigated by a horde of amateur corsairs, plundering at will. This conscious misappropriation of style is, in a word, the cult of the pseudo-romantic or the pseudo-picturesque. It is an epidemic so insidious and so multiform as to have inoculated every department of letters. Poetry has been no freer from it than the leading article; the essayist, the traveller, the novelist, the biographer, the orator, and the critic are as poisoned by it as the sensational reporter. And its phenomena are perfectly accessible to analysis. Its methods are simply an aggregate of shifts and contrivances designed to suggest a kind of opaque and indefinite excitement to the feelings, rather than to convey a sharp impression to the mind. Vagueness of a certain kind is not only the effect, but actually the object of this ruinous abuse of the art of writing. Precision of statement, *unless* the statement itself is susceptible of every equivocation, is avoided at all hazard, and any stimulus to a spurious emotional appeal directly encouraged. To that end, it makes use of every figure that will serve to keep the feelings divorced from the intellect. Pleonasm, the reduplication of selected epithets, hyperbole, exclamation, redundancy, and the use of abstract generalization are some of the commoner expedients. It is curious to note what effect this sensuous treatment of style has upon the standardizing of language. The more lax and fluid, that is to say, the sentiments embodied in expression, the more

circumscribed and stereotyped the expression itself. For a varied choice of phrase visualizing the inchoate idea, as upon a burning glass and in condensed and concrete form, is a delicate register of the multiple impressions of reality. But the glib, the picturesque appeal to the surface emotions, artificially simplifies the nervous organism of style. The one method defines its meaning; the other, aiming at a decorative effect rather than a meaning, creates an appeal, confused indeed, but insubstantial. Hence the most remarkable feature of the pseudo-romantic—that it tends to narrow expression down to a few stereotyped phrases, and to apply such easy clichés indiscriminately to every phase of emotion. As Pope says:—

"False eloquence, like the prismatic glass,  
Its gaudy colors spreads on ev'ry place;  
The face of nature we no more survey,  
All glares alike, without distinction gay."

The results are pernicious both for readers and writers. The reader, his emotions disoriented and atrophied through lack of contact with the mind, will respond to the appeal only if expressed in the manner to which he has been accustomed, and literature has become a doss-house for the needy and fagged brains of the amateur. To what extent, indeed, the organization of shoddy, of the catch-word and the half-truth may shatter the destinies of a free people, the last few days have amply testified. Precisely the same considerations belong to the impressionist. Impressionism, by subordinating ideas to treatment, has altered the quintessential artistic canon that treatment must be not only an exact, but a metaphysically exact, interpretation of the material. Its mannerisms, its facility, its cleverness and aptitude, its casual picturesqueness, have not only thrown into relief the less durable and severe forms of literary utterance, but have left the reader to find the needle of the essential in a haystack of incidentals.

The first defence, then, against this corruption of style which we have called the pseudo-romantic, is to swing the mind back upon the object. To a superficial glance, the realists, than whom no school is less concerned with literary finesse, appear to have accomplished it. They swoop down upon the object like an eagle upon some innocent lamb and bear it away wholesale. Mr. Henry James calls the realistic method "the presentation of a huge, inauspicious amount," but he is wrong, we think, in regarding this eager stock-taking of relevant and irrelevant commodities (closely allied, by the way, to the impressionist method) as an isolated phenomenon, rather than the fount of infelicity. It is, on the contrary, the inevitable result, not of an objective art, but of the auto-biographical obsession obtruding upon the critical, the measuring, the selective faculty. The realists cannot express life in the terms of its artistic valuation, but only in terms of themselves. Their characters and situations are a close corporation; they need not be replicas or projections of their creator's personalities; but, having no objective momentum, they cannot but revolve within their own orbit. The subjective interest is their master. Limited to their own experience, it is not powerful or significant enough to drive them into identification with the universal truths and realities of life. And art, the balancing of exquisitely rarefied and harmonized values, will have nothing to do with them. Even if we allow them the photographic reproduction of the object, it is at the expense of the metaphysic—that is to say, the reality of the object.

The truth is, that in all these manifestations of false art we are confronted with the separation of form from idea. The task, therefore, for the classical stylist of the

future is to effect a new reconciliation, a new adjustment between these primary elements. And here it is that we require a new definition of the term "classical." Whatever our respect for tradition, we cannot possibly return, without a loss of vitality, either to the utilitarian classicism of the ancients, the naive classicism of the Middle Ages, or the polite classicism of the eighteenth-century Augustans. A nation with such travail and experience behind it and with such discord in its midst as our own, must seek for some *rapport* between classicism and romanticism, flourishing, if possible, simultaneously. It is a curious fact that the excess of the one is liable to produce *at the same time* an excess of the other. In the eighteenth century, for instance, the prose style of Addison, Swift, Grey, and Walpole coincided not only with the disingenuous Gothic revival, but with the pseudo-picturesque cult of the minor versifiers. The only difference between our own romantics and those of Philips's "Blenheim," Young's "Night Thoughts," and Nicholas Rowe's translation in heroic couplets of Lucan's "Pharsalia" is a difference in the use of certain specific mannerisms. And, in the same way, the orgies of the picturesque moderns are tending to create an effect of a diffusely grey coloration which we may call an extravagant abuse of the classic method.

Concentration upon the object, therefore, does not imply the formation of bare and graceless outlines in expression. On the contrary, it implies the closest assimilation of the factors of form and idea into a third compound. That compound we may call rhythm or synthesis, or, in Mr. Sturge Moore's words, "poise." It is that compound which, unlike form or idea considered separately, is always mobile and elastic, and performs two definite functions in relation to the art of writing. It throws that art from a particular into a universal connotation, and it preserves and registers an organic symmetry between the form and the idea, between the conception and its method of embodiment. And it is only in the achievement of rhythm that the classic and the romantic, either in form or idea, can mutually co-exist, and that the personality of the writer (or, in other words, the originality of the thing written) can flow into all the parts of the mechanism without disturbing either their interrelation or their equilibrium.

#### DR. JOHNSON AS CYNIC.

Most of us would wager that there is nothing new to be said about Dr. Johnson, and we should add, for our part, that if there is, we do not greatly care to hear it. Some great figures in literature inspire a disturbing and curious love. Every generation will find something new to say of Shelley and Byron, and even Shakespeare himself was of their race. The passion they inspire is a romantic devotion, and after each disillusion it will, in Beyle's phrase, "crystallize" afresh. It is not for surprises or unplumbed depths that we value Dr. Johnson. We know Boswell's idol in every facet and in every light. It is a massive statue, but it is not at all mysterious. If any new critic discovers subtleties or novelties, we are apt to feel that he is depriving us precisely of those qualities of robust common-sense which were the essence of the man. In a penetrating essay which he has contributed to the "Fortnightly Review," Mr. Baumann claims that he has made a discovery. It is that Johnson was a cynic. The suggestion, at the first shock, is rather revolting. We think of the great man's opinion of a still greater intellect, who really was a cynic. For Swift he

professed an unconquerable disdain, and of Voltaire he was content to say, with an adamantine simplicity, that he was "a bad man." There flashes to the memory some phrase from his prayers, and the mind refuses to apply this word to the learned child who walked through a complicated universe with the beliefs and the pieties of an untroubled faith. "Cynic" suggests at least a certain complication of outlook, some disillusionment, some shattering of belief. No man was ever born a cynic, but was there ever a mind which remained more serenely itself, in age and youth, the same sharp instrument of an unclouded soul?

We confess that Mr. Baumann has accumulated some evidence for his novel opinion, which deserves to be considered, and the reader who turns questioning to his Boswell, will find ample confirmation. Dr. Johnson indulged in few illusions about men, and in none about women. When he was really in good conversational form, and had "tossed and gored several persons" in an evening, he would generally deliver some highly realistic utterance about his fellow-creatures. Mr. Baumann quotes some of them—the remark that "women have a perpetual envy of our vices" is a flagrant instance. Those which occur to us are rather more genial than this. There is, for example, the saying which so startled Gibbon, that an educated man would rather be proved a rascal than found deficient in the graces, or the similar deliverance that "a man had rather have a hundred lies told about him, than one truth that he does not wish to be told." Or, again, there is his consolation to a gentleman who was afraid to marry a lady on account of the superiority of her talents. "Sir (said he), you need not be afraid; marry her. Before a year goes about, you'll find that reason much weaker, and that wit not so bright." Much of this light play of "cynical" talk was doubtless nothing more than the flash of his wit on the hard anvil of fact. Some of it sprang from what Boswell called his "spirit of contradiction." If other people talked romance, he retorted with realism; when Mrs. Thrale spread her wings, he would warn her that "there are clippers abroad." Some of it was simply his irrepressible repartee. Take for example his reply to someone who wished him to write a eulogy on a lady distinguished for her kindly "condescension to her inferiors." "It might not be so easy to discover who the lady's inferiors were." The best of this Johnsonian "cynicism" was really pure light-hearted sport:—

"There are (said he) inexcusable lies and consecrated lies. For instance, we are told that on the arrival of the news of the Battle of Fontenoy, every heart beat and every eye was in tears. Now we know that no man ate his dinner the worse, but there should have been all this concern, and to say that there was (smiling), may be reckoned a consecrated lie."

We should like to hear Mr. Baumann's views on this passage. He will have it that Johnson had much wit, but no humor. If one starts with that rather odd opinion, one may interpret the great man's jokes somewhat too seriously.

The case for Dr. Johnson's "cynicism" is, however, rather stronger than this. Mr. Baumann insists that Johnson indulged not merely in a theoretical cynicism, but drew from his low reading of human nature a practical, Chesterfieldian worldly wisdom. The instance which he gives is plausible—Johnson's argument that hospitality does not itself advance a man; it is better to use your wealth to get people into your power by lending them money. A lighter instance occurs to us. It is the passage in which Johnson argued that in some cases it does pay to court the great. "If you can get a shilling's worth of good for sixpence worth of court,

you are a fool if you do not pay court." In the mouth of a rebellious radical idealist this saying would have been highly cynical. But is it so when Johnson utters it? He believed in rank. He venerated monarchs. He held the most child-like Jacobite-Tory view of Society. If Jack Wilkes had recommended paying court to the great if you could make sixpence by this exercise of your wits, we should justly have called him a rather vulgar cynic. But in Johnson's view of the world, to court the great was as natural and as proper as to obey the King. We come to the centre of our difference with Mr. Baumann, when he quotes Dr. Johnson's remark in the Hebrides, that no man is naturally good ("No, madam; no more than a wolf"), and Lady MacLeod's whispered retort: "This is worse than Swift." We should have said, for our part, that it is as bad as the Prayer-book. Johnson differed from the rest of mankind simply in this, that when he repeated every day that we are all miserable sinners, and that there is no health in us, he believed it. There are at least two passages which illustrate what he really meant. One is his remark that disinterested benevolence is "not possible for finite beings"; and the other is his pregnant aphorism: "No, sir, a fallible being will fail somewhere." If this is cynicism, then the bitterest of cynics were the Fathers of the Church, and Pascal a more savage satirist than Swift.

If we differ from Mr. Baumann's diagnosis, it is not at all because we question the stout and fearless realism of Dr. Johnson. He thought no more highly of "finite beings" than a good Christian ought to think. We differ only in disputing that this is cynicism. The realist sees facts as they are, and he is content that they should be what they are. He expects nothing else and nothing better. When he utters his pungent generalizations he does not condemn; he merely describes. The cynic all the while is tortured by his ideal of what men ought to be. Lady MacLeod's "worse than Swift" was a comprehensive missing of both Swift's point and Johnson's. When Johnson said that men were no more capable of natural goodness than wolves, he accepted that fact as the divinely ordered scheme of things. He would have added that we poor were-wolves may be redeemed by faith. Swift is not cynical when he draws his portrait of the Yahoos. The cynicism begins with the ideal presentation of the Houyhnhnms. The Yahoo would not be vile if only Yahoos were possible. It is the possibility of a supremely reasonable Houyhnhnm which condemns them. His cynicism was the *sæva indignatio* which lacerated his heart at the thought that mankind should fall so far below the ideal. Dr. Johnson felt no savage rage at our imperfections. To have indulged in that would have been for him to question the goodness of a Creator who made us "fallible." To describe the cynic as a person who insists on seeing disagreeable truths, or believes when in doubt in the lower motive, is an inadequate definition. The essence of cynicism, to our thinking, is disappointment. It is the revenge of the idealist for his vanished visions. If Voltaire wrote "Candide" in his old age, and delighted in punishing Pangloss with the loss of a nose, an eye, and all his illusions, it was because in his own manhood he had himself been one of Pangloss's victims. Had he not paraphrased Pope's "Essay on Man," and defended the thesis of the best of all possible worlds? The mortal cynicism is not that of the man who is disappointed in his fellows; it is that of the man who is disappointed in himself. If Voltaire had all his life defied the Court, and fought the Jesuits, he would have been a rebel but not a cynic. His cynicism was largely his revenge on mankind, for his own occasional lapses of courage.

From all such complications Dr. Johnson was free. He was neither rebel nor idealist, and if he saw the foibles of mankind, he saw them without disappointment. The child who perceived that the Emperor wore no clothes was not a cynic. The crowd which professed to see the clothes was not cynical. The cynic was the poet who expected grown men to tell the truth about kings.

## Art.

### THE HORRORS OF WAR.

We dealt recently with an exhibition of English drawings—cartoons of the war—which showed in a peculiarly interesting fashion a detached, subjective sense in dealing with such subjects of cruelty, outrage, bloodthirstiness, and fear. The seven deadly sins—and death—were all expressed by symbols, developed from traditions, and seen through a mental temperament that jested grimly, but with much philosophic detachment. After these men, in whom horror and disgust are no less profound, it is interesting to examine the vision inspired by the same subjects, of a man of a more objective habit of thought and training, yet with an equal ease of expression—Mr. Louis Raemaekers, the Dutch political cartoonist.

Though the romantic tradition of ideas which holds sway in this country is reputed to produce poor drawing, curiously, the great advantage held by the English artists is in the sense of severe drawing in line and its power of expression. Considered technically, the drawings of Mr. Raemaekers cannot be compared with those of Mr. E. J. Sullivan or with the fantastic but powerful loose lines and splashes of black in Mr. Dyson's cartoons. In looking through the collection of his war cartoons at the Fine Art Society's Gallery, one becomes aware of the high degree of instruction in the technique of presentation and even in sentiment that he has acquired from Steinlen and from the German caricaturists of "Simplicissimus." It is even possible, in the majority of the works, to detect the particular origin of style or manner. The actual savagery of expression and subject is rarely illuminated by the laughter of humor, but by a bitter irony and wit, and with a sense throughout of obsession and nearness. There is not that fine clarity of spirit which permits a Frenchman (Huard) to draw an elderly gentleman, just before his execution by a German firing party, sending by two friends, even older and feebler than himself, "his adieu to their colleagues of the Council, and regrets to the gentlemen of the Cercle that he would not be able to come to play bridge."

The collection exhibits, rather, an urgent endeavor to give such impressions as an eye-witness would offer. Through all his opinions—his indignation and loathing of the German invasion of Belgium and France dominating all—is a terrible recurring vision of carnage, "cemeteries extending to the sea." The vastness of the mass of dead has filled his mind and overwhelmed him with a tremendous sorrow and unhappiness. He draws dead children, dead boys, mad and dead mothers, gassed soldiers and mangled wounded, executed civilians, death and madness everywhere, and the faces and hands of bullies. A typical example of his work, a drawing reminding one of his reported predilection for landscape painting, is called "The Marshes of Pinsk." The Kaiser said in the spring: "When the leaves fall you shall have peace." It represents a marsh in autumn, yellow leaves are falling into the pools filled with slain Germans—swamps and dead men—mud and blood—most horrifying combination, that decorative background of modern "scientific" warfare, of armies in winter quarters in wet, waterlogged trenches, separated from their foes by morasses, and wearing uniforms of earth color.

Of the designs, the most Germanic in technical motive and subject is "Liège to Aix la Chapelle"—the side of a black railway van with running blood trickling from beneath the door forming pools on the step,

*Lüttich zu Aachen* is written above in white chalk. It is very simple, and uses with peculiar effectiveness the quality gained by suggesting brutal ghastliness. There are three drawings to add to the great Dance of Death of 1914-15, and, alas! 1916 also. One a robed skeleton with a bulging paunch, called "Fattening Work," another a skeleton dancing the Tango with a weary and red-eyed Germania, "From east to west from west to east I dance with thee!" Last, Death with his scythe—The Harvest Ripe.

The caricatures of the Kaiser hardly aim at estimating his peculiar character and personality, for he is merely made to appear a sinister and Machiavellian schemer. The keen psychological analysis of Mr. Sullivan is not challenged, nor Mr. Dyson's play upon the ideal of the colossal. The vanity and self-righteousness of the Emperor William are passed over, and instead he is made the grinning witness behind the curtain, who says, "Now you can bring me the American protest." Perhaps Mr. Raemaekers would maintain that the Kaiser, as he sees him, is the figure-head and representative of a merciless conspiracy against peace. More probably he has had no time for such an investigation of character, and his eyes and his memory are dimmed with the vapor of fresh-spilled blood.

Technically, although the scattered lines and hesitancy or unsureness of drawing give peculiar aid to the general sense of dismay and horror, we are not moved by a deeply interesting quality in the drawing or the masterly handling of material. These things are not in the drawings. Object and purport are the things he seeks or finds, and quite frequently in consequence a singular felicity of arrangement and composition is the result. Mr. Raemaekers' work is first-class journalism, and his obvious sincerity and single-mindedness gives it a real social and historical value.

## Present-Day Problems.

### THE GERMANIC SOLUTIONS OF THE POLISH QUESTION.

FROM the German point of view, the problem of Belgium is simple. It is an external problem, it has as yet no history of its own, and does not affect in any way the interests of Germany's ally, the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. It has been created by Germany, and it will be decided by force of arms. The issue lies exclusively between Germany and the Powers of the Entente.

But it is with the greatest reluctance that Germany admits the reopening of the Polish question. The fear of having to face that question, more perhaps than anything else, had restrained Germany for over forty years from aggression against Russia. The Germanic armies are now in possession of practically the whole of ethnographic Poland; the Poles are clamoring for a declaration of German policy with regard to them; the Austrian Government is known to favor a certain definite solution; official Germany preserves an enigmatic silence about her own intentions in the matter. (Herr von Bethmann Hollweg's speeches, in so far as they concern the future of Poland, can best be described as "eloquent silence.") Whatever her final official answer may be, and whenever it may come, the silence which Germany has so long maintained concerning the Polish question is more interesting for us, and more significant than her verbosity with regard to Belgium. By silence, official Germany tries to cover up disagreements within the camp of the Central Powers.

The policy of the Quadruple Entente with regard to the Polish question can be summed up in a very few words. The four Powers are agreed on common action; as Russia is the only one which has an immediate interest in Poland, no solution can be considered by the Quadruple Entente which Russia should declare unacceptable to herself. This had better be remembered as a political axiom by anyone who wishes to discuss the

Polish question. Saving their faith to their Eastern Ally, the three Western Powers will always favor the solution which will offer and guarantee the widest measure of political liberty to all the races inhabiting Poland, which will correspond most closely to the wishes of its population, and which will contribute most effectively to a satisfactory and secure settlement of the international problems of Eastern Europe. No settlement, however, could be considered either satisfactory or secure which would result in an increase of Germany's military power.

The main Germanic solutions of the Polish question start from the assumption that Russia will renounce the possession of what was on the outbreak of the war her part of Poland, and that Prussia will not be compelled to do the same. It would be idle and beside the point to discuss whether, and for what compensations, Russia would be likely to consent to these terms. We are not discussing possible terms of peace, but merely the ideas entertained with regard to the future of Poland by the two Germanic States and by the Austrophil Poles.

The Austrophil Poles demand that Austrian and Russian Poland should be united into a single Polish Kingdom loosely connected with the Hapsburg Monarchy. We have no reason to suppose that the programme of the Austrophil Poles is distasteful to the ruling circles of Austria-Hungary; we might in fact call it the Austrian solution of the Polish question. Its demands are, however, certain to cause embarrassments with regard to Germany.

Within the Monarchy there are four factors which count in Austro-Hungarian policy, the dynasty with its "interest" (in the eighteenth-century political meaning of the word), the Magyars, the Austrian-Germans, and the Galician Poles. The family ambitions of the dynasty would be fully satisfied by the elevation of a Hapsburg to the Polish throne, its wider interest in the Monarchy as a Great Power by the creation of a Polish State dependent on it. The Austrian-Germans would hardly regret the loss of Galicia and the consequent elimination of the Poles from the Viennese Parliament. As a matter of fact, "the separation of Galicia" (*die Sonderstellung Galiziens*) has always been demanded by the German Chauvinists in Austria. It would weaken the non-German vote in Parliament, and give the Germans a freer hand for the oppression of the Tchechs and of the Slovenes. They might then be able to institute at last in Austria the policy which the Magyars have pursued towards the other nationalities of Hungary for the last forty years, and which the Germans had hoped to maintain in their half of the Monarchy when they agreed to the creation of the dual system. The effervescence of the war and the growing influence of the Prussian mind on the Austrian-Germans have raised in them their old spirit of aggressive intolerance. The practically open hostility of the Tchechs and the Jugo-Slavs to this German War would certainly serve the Austrian-Germans as pretext for the adoption of a new departure in internal Austrian policy, should they be left a free hand in these matters. To the Magyars the solution proposed by the Austrian Poles is in every way agreeable. The weakening of the Slavs in the Austrian Parliament and the crushing of the Tchechs and Slovenes by the Germans would strengthen their hands in their policy of oppression towards the Slovens and Jugo-Slavs; the acceptance of the idea of a semi-independent State, only very loosely connected with Austria, would serve as a precedent for demanding a revision on similar lines of the constitutional relations between Austria and Hungary; the separation of Galicia would reduce Austria's relative strength with regard to Hungary; the creation of a strong and wide barrier, covering at least the strategically weakest part of their frontier against Russia would still further encourage them in their attempts to Magyarize and subdue the Ruthenes, the Slovens, and the Jugo-Slavs. For the present war has only strengthened the determination of the Magyars to pursue their previous policy of oppression towards the non-Magyar nationalities.

It is from Germany that no willing acceptance of the Polish demands can be expected. A semi-indepen-

dent, fairly strong Polish State, consisting of Russian and Austrian Poland, would necessarily try in time to regain the German "Polonia Irredenta," the province of Posen, which is the cradle of the old Polish national State, Upper Silesia, the rich industrial and mining districts inhabited by a Polish-speaking population, and last but not least, its one natural outlet to the sea, i.e., the old Polish harbor of Danzig. Poland is the land of the Vistula-basin, and Danzig, at the mouth of the river, is its indispensable complement. Italy's example has shown that the necessities of policy may compel a Government to enter and to remain for many years in an alliance contrary to the feelings of the nation, but that such alliances do not change the deeply-rooted sentiments of nationality, and cannot permanently stand the strain placed upon them by those sentiments.

The Western Powers, always *salva fide* to their Eastern Ally, would have no reason to object, from the point of view of their own interests, to the formation of an independent or semi-independent Poland under any monarch who should prove acceptable to the Poles, provided sufficient guarantees were received concerning the following three points: that the direction of Polish foreign policy and the organization of the Polish army be independent of, or at least on a footing of equality with, those of Austria and Hungary; that Poland be not drawn into any aggressive commercial organization; and that a satisfactory settlement of the problems of the other nationalities of Austria and Hungary should precede the exclusion of Galicia from the Austrian Parliament. The greater the measure of independence enjoyed by the new Polish State the smaller will be the possibility of its exercising any influence in Austria's internal affairs. The separation of home affairs always and everywhere precedes the separation of armies and foreign policies. The creation of a Polish State, even if it were entirely independent in matters of army organization and foreign policy, would not counter-balance, in so far as the interests of the Western Powers are concerned, the dangers implied in the Germanization of Austria and in the Magyarization of Hungary. Moreover, no durable settlement can be reached, as long as any one nationality is oppressed by, and made subservient to, the interests of another nationality.

The fate of the Tchechs and Slovens and of the Jugo-Slavs cannot, and ought not to be, a matter of indifference to the Poles. In the past the Poles have failed to co-operate with the other Slavs in the Austrian Parliament; their presence at Vienna has secured the smaller Slav nations against the dominion of a ruthless German majority, but ever since 1868 the Poles have refused to assist the Tchechs and Jugo-Slavs in the task of creating a new Austria in which the equality of all nationalities would not have been the effect of German impotence, but would have been implied and expressed in the constitutional foundations of the State. The Poles were kept in obedience to the Viennese Hofburg and out of an alliance with the Tchechs and Jugo-Slavs, by the fear of Russia and at the price of Polish dominion over the Ruthenes of East Galicia. *Tout comprendre c'est tout pardonner*; yet the fact remains that their attitude of indifference towards the other Austrian Slavs has allowed Austrian foreign policy to be determined by Berlin and Budapest, and has thus created a situation in Eastern Europe of which the present war is the direct outcome. Should the national resurrection of Poland be followed at the conclusion of the war by the loss to the smaller nationalities in Austria of the little which they had before the war, their own new national existence would be built on weak foundations, for many great convulsions would still shake the political systems of Eastern Europe before a durable settlement could be reached.

The dogma of "the indivisibility of Russian Poland," which all the Polish memoranda and proclamations affirm, is levelled directly against certain proposals concerning the Polish question that are thought to be in favor with certain important circles in Berlin. Influential advocates of German expansion demand the annexation of the western parts of Russian Poland, of the governments of Suvalki, Lomza, Plotz, and Kalish,

and of certain parts of the government of Warsaw and of that of Piotrkow containing the rich districts of iron and coal mines round Sosnowitse and Tchenstochova. Hundreds of thousands of German colonists already reside in these districts; more would be sent thither should these provinces be united to Germany. Fresh supplies of recruits would be received by the Prussian armies, a district fit to support a second Essen would be acquired in the East, and new markets would be opened for German trade. The Poles of these newly conquered districts might be excluded from "a share in influencing the destinies of the German Empire" (as is asked with regard to Belgium by those who petition for its annexation); a victorious Germany could afford to inflict injustice on an even larger scale than she had done before the war. All Poles would consider the passing of any further part of Poland under Germany a national disaster.

But even for Germany the acquisition of more Polish land would imply inconveniences and dangers, which are certainly seriously considered in Berlin. It would not be an easy task to break the spirit of the Poles in the newly acquired provinces. Close contact with them might even bring about a moral and intellectual revival among the Poles of Posen, of Upper Silesia, and of West Prussia. Further, the annexation by Austria of the remaining parts of Russian Poland (which, *under this scheme* would become mere Austrian provinces, in the same position as that of Galicia before the war) would strengthen immensely the influence of the Poles in the Viennese Parliament. In fact, it would establish in it a definite Slav preponderance, whilst the chief obstacles to the close co-operation of all the Austrian Slavs would be removed. At the same time, it would greatly increase Austria's preponderance over Hungary. This solution then would probably put an end to the Austro-German alliance and certainly to the Prussian and Magyar dominion over Austrian foreign policy.

As a result of the defeats suffered in 1866, Austria had granted wide liberties and self-government to the Poles in Galicia; the *débâcle* of France in 1870 deprived the Poles of their traditional hopes of effective support from Western Europe. Meantime, Russia was pursuing, largely under German influence, an anti-Polish policy. It now became the chief concern of the Austrian Poles to preserve the last refuge which Polish liberty found in Galicia; their own national interest came thus to be linked with the safety of the Hapsburg Monarchy. The alliance with Germany was considered necessary for the security of Austria against Russia, and thus the fear of Russia finally made the Austrian Poles vote in favor of an alliance with Prussia, the worst and most irreconcilable enemy of Poland. Should Russia renounce her share in Poland, the forces working for a close understanding between the Russians and the Poles would be given a better chance than they ever previously enjoyed in history, and no grounds would be left for fear or distrust between these two branches of the Slav race.

The other question which hitherto secured to the Viennese Hofburg the obedience of the Polish representatives in Parliament—*i.e.*, the conflict between the Poles and the Ruthenians in East Galicia, in which Vienna played the part of an interested umpire, would in all probability disappear entirely from Austrian politics. If a cession of Poland by Russia is at all thinkable, East Galicia, which the Russians claim on grounds of nationality, would necessarily have to be one of the compensations received by her in exchange.

Thus, besides strengthening the Polish opposition in Prussia, a partition of Russian Poland between the two Germanic States might result in a profound transformation of Austria; she might change into a Slav State, siding with Russia and the Western Powers against Germany. These possibilities are sufficiently serious to make German statesmen consider and reconsider whether it would pay them to try to carry out that solution of the Polish question against the wishes of the Poles and of the other deciding factors in Austro-Hungary.

The reasons which might make German statesmen doubt whether a new partition of Poland would really be

profitable to Germany, are not sufficient to make the Western Powers ever give their consent to that measure. The dangers which might arise from it for Germany are a possibility, the increase in Germany's own military resources would be a certainty, and this war has proved that in an army trained and kept under German discipline the feelings of the individual soldier count for little. In fact, a new partition of Poland would be no solution of the Polish question at all, but, at the best, would prepare the basis for a second world-war, in which German Imperialism would meet with final disaster. But next in importance to our pledged word to our Allies, and to our wish for the liberation of other nations, is our desire for a secure peace. The Poles may rest assured that the Western Powers will never agree to a new partition of Poland by means of which Germany would enlarge her Polish possessions.

A third "solution" put forward recently proposes that Russian Poland be changed into a German "Bundesstaat" under a German prince. This, however, would be absolutely unacceptable to everyone except Germany. It would mark in no way any progress towards Polish unity, and the Hapsburgs, who in any case would have to make sacrifices elsewhere, would realize at last that they have been fighting *pour le roi de Prusse*. Germany's military resources would receive a very considerable accession; finally, there would be no chance of Austria changing into a predominantly Slav State. It is unthinkable that Russia could ever countenance such a proposal, but even could Russia's own interests receive sufficient compensation elsewhere, the other partners in the Quadruple Entente could never agree to it, just as they could never consent to the annexation of a single square mile of Belgian or French territory by Germany.

This war has never been waged for the disruption of ethnographic Germany, but to put an end once and for ever to the German dominion over other nations, and to the German desire to extend that dominion still further. That fundamental purpose must be kept in mind when judging proposals for the settlement of the Polish question.

## Communications.

### THE COMPACT WITH MR. ASQUITH.

*To the Editor of THE NATION.*

SIR,—In these days of official reports, conferences between Cabinet Ministers and organized labor need to be carefully watched, and the published account of the meeting between Mr. Asquith, Mr. Lloyd George, and the Amalgamated Society of Engineers is no exception to this rule. Already an entirely wrong impression of what actually occurred, and of the results of the discussion, is getting abroad—an impression which, wittingly or unwittingly, the Minister of Munitions fostered in the House of Commons on Tuesday last. Then he declared that he was moving a new clause to the Amending Bill because it had been demanded by the A.S.E. as the price of their support to the Dilution of Labor Scheme. Under the clause in question the Ministry of Munitions is given power to fix "the remuneration and employment" of semi-skilled and unskilled male workers engaged on processes that before the war were reserved for skilled men. In other words, he suggested, as did the official report of the conference, that the A.S.E. had agreed to co-operate with this department in return for Circular L3. Fortunately for the smooth working of the Munitions Industry, much more than the mere legalizing of L3 was obtained, and it is important that publicity should be given to the actual terms made by the Engineers with the Prime Minister.

It is true that Circulars L2 and L3 will in the future govern the wages and conditions of semi-skilled and unskilled men and of female workers. But other promises made by the Government will have to be kept, if the engineers are to co-operate in the diluting of labor. In

the first place, the whole process of arbitration under Part I. of the Munitions of War Act, 1915, is to be speeded up. As things now stand, no strike can take place when once a matter has been referred to the Board of Trade for settlement, provided that reference takes place within a period of twenty-one days. The engineers asked for, and obtained, the concession that, if within twenty-one days of the reference of any matter to the Board of Trade no settlement had been reached by the arbitrators, the union should be free to resort to direct action if necessary. This concession is now a part of the Amending Bill. It is worth noting that this obvious change was refused in the House of Commons when the Amending Bill was originally discussed. Secondly, the A.S.E. obtained from the Prime Minister a promise that the appeal courts established under the Amending Bill should be appeal courts of mixed law and fact. In the supplementary Amending Bill of Tuesday this promise is redeemed. Henceforward the legality of a decision by a Munitions Tribunal will not be the only important factor; the equity of the decision will also be taken into account when a worker appeals against some penalty or finding. One other concession must be mentioned. The Prime Minister renewed to the A.S.E. the promise, already made by Mr Lloyd George to Mr. John Hodge, that there shall be no imprisonment for refusing to pay fines levied under the Act. The necessity for this change has been obvious from the very first, and the repentance of the Cabinet on this point is to be welcomed, despite the fact that it has been long delayed.

So far I have dealt with concessions obtained by the A.S.E. which have found their way into the Amending Bill. Now I should like to turn to certain other promises made by the Prime Minister which will have to be redeemed by administrative order. They are four in number. (1) The workers' side of the Munitions Tribunals is no longer to be chosen from the panels set up under the Unemployed Insurance Act. In future, the workmen's assessors are to be drawn from new panels specifically chosen for the purpose, and containing a preponderating number of men likely to understand the points at issue. (2) No rules or regulations, except the model rules issued by the Ministry of Munitions, are to be posted up in any establishment, or are to have force in any workshop without preliminary discussion with the unions concerned. I should like to call special attention to the fact that *discussion* only has been guaranteed. There is, however, good reason for believing that the engineers interpret "discussion" as "agreement," and, unless this point is cleared up, trouble may easily arise. Personally, I fear lest the narrower interpretation will be accepted by the Ministry, and if that be the case, there can be little doubt that the rank and file of the A.S.E. will become very restive. (3) The whole question of Local Joint Committees has been remitted to the Ministry of Munitions, but under certain guarantees: (i.) Such committees are to be established in every area; (ii.) the workers on these committees are to be chosen by the engineering unions concerned in the production of munitions; (iii.) the committees are to be empowered to act as initial courts, and before them will come for settlement cases that may lead to serious difficulty; (iv.) these joint committees are to have power also to issue leaving certificates, and they will thus deprive the Munitions Tribunals of their main and most irritating function. (4) In future all important rules and regulations issued by the Ministry of Munitions or agreed to by the unions concerned are to be published in the "Board of Trade Labor Gazette."

It will readily be admitted, I think, that the official report was calculated to mislead, and opened the way for charges against the honor of the A.S.E. Much more than £2 or £3 was obtained, and there will be need for the engineers to observe very carefully the fate of the concessions promised, but obtainable only by order from the Minister of Munitions. If the dilution of labor scheme is to be worked, then both sides to the agreement must keep their bargain. Every change promised by the Prime Minister must be carried out, both in the spirit and in the letter, before the co-operation of the engineers can be expected; and it is upon that carrying out that the co-operation depends. It is absolutely essential that the real terms of the bargain should be stated, and in

this communication I have tried to give the A.S.E.'s view of the position.

To those who have followed recent events in the world of munitions, one or two omissions in the amendments won by the engineers will readily occur. Nothing has been done to meet the grievances of workers under the leaving certificate clause of the original Act. During the course of the debate on Tuesday Mr. Lloyd George stated that no alternative proposals had been put forward by the trade unions; but when he said this, he must surely have forgotten the conference of November 30th. Then a reasoned amendment was passed, which if adopted would prevent "employers from pinching workmen," and would at the same time remove all taint of slavery. The proposed change has been published in THE NATION, and I do not need again to state its terms. I mention it here because there can be no guarantee of peace until the clause as it now stands is abolished, and another and more equitable one substituted.

Three further changes seem to me to be necessary: (1) the Local Joint Committees must be given the power to take part in the control of the munitions industry; (2) the whole administration of the Act must be decentralized; and (3) the restoration of trade union rights and customs must become the business of the Local Committees, which alone can possess the requisite knowledge. With the concessions won by the A.S.E., and with these further changes, the whole-hearted co-operation of labor can be secured. The Munitions of War Act, 1915, will have become an agreed measure; it will raise rather than lower the status of the trade unions; and no longer will there be need for Mr. Lloyd George to face hostile audiences on the Clyde, in order to defend what so many workers believe to be a harsh and indefensible Act.

—Yours, &c.,

W. MELLOR.

## Letters to the Editor.

### THE INCLINED PLANE TO ZABERN.

*To the Editor of THE NATION.*

SIR,—Is the struggle for liberty and civilization in Europe going to end in the loss of both in England?

It would almost seem so, if the process of throwing overboard one Liberal principle after another is to continue.

To those who have for years watched the gradual and subtle forces working for the break-up of Liberalism this apprehension is nothing new. The passion for managing, arranging, and ordering the lives of the people (as opposed to giving them freedom), which has been the keynote of modern Germany, has infected the ruling classes in Great Britain to an extraordinary degree.

In no one has this passion taken a deeper hold than in Mr. Lloyd George. Starting with a real love of liberty, born, perhaps, of his native hills, the ambition seized him to turn the Budget of 1909 into a great edifice of "constructive statesmanship." In this work he was borne aloft by a great wave of popular enthusiasm, which saw in the Budget an opportunity of sweeping away deep-seated anomalies and oppressive privileges. Yet even in this early stage a keen scent might have detected a strong German flavor in many provisions of that famous Act. The next stage sees Mr. Lloyd George tasting real blood for the first time over the Insurance Act, and winning admiration of friend and foe alike by the energy and skill with which he forced an unpopular (and highly Teutonic) measure down the throats of the people.

In the third stage of the inclined plane we see him, armed with the Munitions Act, attempting single-handed to run the entire industry of the war on bureaucratic lines, performing undoubted marvels of organization and co-ordination on the most approved Fabian Society lines, already involved in an attitude of impotent contempt for the stupidity and "too-late-ness" of his less gifted fellow-countrymen, flattered by an unscrupulous and reactionary press, and now driving headlong into trouble with the working classes amongst whom he was until recently looked to as a liberator.

Where will the remorseless logic of the inclined plane

lead? Already we hear of the Prussian touch at Glasgow in the confiscation of a paper which dared to report an unsatisfactory meeting between him and 3,000 trade unionists in that city.

From open contempt of democracy to Zabern is but a step. But Zabern in England will not end as it did in Germany. There is a dangerous spirit abroad already. Liberals must pull themselves together and see to it that, just at the very moment when hope is dawning in our grim struggle with Prussian Militarism in Europe, we are not planting the seeds of an even more terrible struggle against Prussian Militarism in Great Britain.—Yours, &c.,

HARRY LLEWELYN DAVIES.

2, Hampstead Mansions, Heath Street, N.W.

January 4th, 1916.

#### CONSCRIPTION.

*To the Editor of THE NATION.*

SIR,—Our politicians have decided to make slaves of Englishmen, and to destroy at a blow the secular glory of the English race. At such a moment it is incumbent upon every man who loves England to speak out. I am no politician; I am neither a military nor a financial expert; but I will yield to none in my love of my country and my detestation of Prussian militarism; and therefore I ask you to allow me to express in your columns my indignation and shame at the decision of the Cabinet. We have declared that we were fighting for liberty and honor; with what face can we repeat that splendid boast when we shall have before us the hideous spectacle of a helpless minority of unwilling youths being dragged by force to slaughter and mutilation? Our politicians have decided that this shall be; but is it the decision of England? Is that mighty spirit dead which has been for ages the terror of tyrants? Is it possible that the nation which, from the days of Wycliffe to the days of Bright, has given the noblest of her sons to the service of Freedom, which threw back the power of the Spaniard, which crushed Napoleon, which has risen freely, in her millions, against Prussian despotism, should now, at this last hour, let herself be fettered and disgraced by a clique of politicians and a corrupt and malignant Press? These things may, indeed, be true: a very few days will show. In the meantime, I will add one more voice, however feeble, to those which have already been raised in defence of English liberty.—Yours, &c.,

LYTTON STRACHEY.

Savile Club. January 6th, 1916.

*To the Editor of THE NATION.*

SIR,—As a member all my life of the Liberal Party, and finally as one who is profoundly anxious to secure as speedily as possible a favorable peace, I would beg to be allowed to add a few words to your eloquent exhortations on the proposal for compulsory military service. In the first place, I would ask what would be left of Liberalism in the Liberal Party after liberty of the person has gone the way of Free Trade and freedom of the Press?

There is another question that I want to ask. Why, after the Boer War, did Mr. Lloyd George object to Chinese labor? In that case the compulsory element was very small; the laborers were enlisted voluntarily; they were magnificently paid in comparison with a Continental conscript army; and they were not compelled to do anything against their religious or conscientious convictions. They merely had to work for a term of years under contract. Am I not right in saying that in 1905 Mr. Lloyd George and most of his colleagues, and certainly the whole of the Liberal Press, made full use of the Chinese Slavery cry in order to drive their opponents out of office? And, admittedly, this cry was very successful in the industrial districts. Now, assuming that I am right, how does Mr. Lloyd George explain his present alliance with Lord Milner and Lord Curzon and other Tory Imperialists, who wish to fasten upon the English working classes an infinitely worse form of servitude than that denounced by Mr. Lloyd George in the case of the Chinamen who went from Shanghai to Johannesburg to please themselves? Let us see what the new system amounts to. In Germany the conscript gets

2½d. a day, in France 2d., in Italy 1d., and in Russia ½d. Meanwhile, there is a severe system of martial law, and industrial compulsion in the great towns and industrial areas of the Continent. Mr. Lloyd George's system of industrial servitude under the Munitions Act is a weak and limping thing, because there is no compulsory service for the Army. That, no doubt, explains why Mr. Lloyd George wants to introduce conscription at once. He is having trouble on the Clyde and on the Tyne. If conscription is introduced first for single men, and then, of course, immediately afterwards for married men—first, perhaps, for England, Wales, and Scotland, and then, of course, immediately afterwards for Ireland—he will then be able to say to a munition worker who is dissatisfied with the wages or hours of labor: "Very well, if you are dissatisfied, you can go to the trenches." Thus, Mr. Lloyd George, and those who are banded with him, will be able to reduce wages and impose any conditions of labor that they like; for every individual workman who revolts will be liable to be sent to the trenches. This is the system which prevails in Germany, France, and Russia; and Mr. Lloyd George has openly praised the French system at the expense of ours. Individual liberty may go hang; it is probably by now as repulsive to him as to Lord Curzon, Lord Milner, and any other of the haughty aristocrats or bureaucrats with whom he is now operating.

I hope this letter will be read by those of the working men delegates at the Trade Union Congress who have not received handles to their names or been sprinkled by the ever-flowing "Fountain of Honor." Permit me to sign myself, in recollection of a leader whose memory we revere amid the reactionary proceedings of his successors,—Yours, &c.,

GLADSTONIAN LIBERAL.

London, January 3rd, 1916.

*To the Editor of THE NATION.*

SIR,—Some aspects of the proposed measure for compelling the unwilling to join the forces seem to have been overlooked. I write as one who has always advocated Universal Service.

It has not been noted that in using the power of the State to make men soldiers at the present time, we are doing something which no Western State yet has done, because in France, Italy, Spain, and Portugal, universal military training has been sanctioned by the majority of the people in the respective countries. Secondly, in these countries military service is only compulsory for home defence. In France and Italy the armies which are sent abroad in peace time are volunteer ones. Thirdly, in attesting men for our Army we compel them to take an oath of allegiance of a very antiquated form. It is doubtful if any man can conscientiously swear eternal allegiance to "heirs and successors." It would be simpler and more honest to cause the men to swear to do their duty to King and country. The exaggeration of the present oath lends an air of unreality to the whole business, as I have too often felt while administering it. Officers, it is curious to remember, take no oath on joining.

There is, however, one really valuable point gained in present-day compulsion, namely, that the men enrolled are not only for military, but for general public service. The weakness of all former methods of enforced service has been in the total overlooking of the fact that men have other duties to the State than that of mere military defence. This has been heretofore forgotten, and the result, which is, I fancy, the chief reason for the strong opposition to it on the part of the bulk of the people, is that through it we are not taught our whole duty, but only one small part of it. In a correspondence which I had with the late Lord Roberts on the subject in 1907, he seems to have been convinced with my argument, for he writes as part of a long letter: "I entirely agree with you that our task is to bring the great body of Liberal opinion to see the advantages that would accrue to the nation from the adoption of our proposals."

If, therefore, we have got as far as to acknowledge officially that citizens owe duties to the State to which they belong, other than, and in addition to, the purely military one, and that the State can enforce the carrying out of

these duties, I think considerable progress has been made in national organization—and away from chaotic individualism.—Yours, &c.,

FRANCIS VANE.

January 3rd, 1916.

*To the Editor of THE NATION*

SIR,—It seems to have escaped your attention that before the passing of the National Registration Bill Mr. Asquith pledged himself not to use it as a stepping-stone for compulsion. Mr. W. Long repudiated this pledge the day after the passing of the Bill only. I wonder why Mr. Asquith's second pledge concerning single men is more sacred than the first?

May I suggest that the new army formed of conscripts be called Lord Northcliffe's Army, as compared with Lord Kitchener's Army?—Yours, &c.,

A WORKING GIRL.

January 3rd, 1916.

*To the Editor of THE NATION*

SIR,—Both in and out of Parliament there may now be opponents of conscription inclined to keep silent for fear of making an unpatriotic confession of divided counsels before the enemy.

May I suggest that such fear is groundless, and that even the spectacle of national disunion would be of trifling import compared with that of Great Britain reduced to panic? And what wilder pitch of panic should we expect to reach than one which, in desperate efforts to sweep up a questionable residue of efficiency, would basely cast away a well-tried heritage of freedom?

The voluntary system has proved its mettle in a way that has probably surprised many of its own supporters. Now let us rally, keener than ever, to its rescue from foes who, foiled in fight, would overthrow it by disreputable dodgery.—Yours, &c.,

G. M. S.

January 6th, 1916.

*To the Editor of THE NATION*

SIR,—Politically and militarily, unity in the face of the enemy is a factor of primary importance, so long as that unity is used for the efficient carrying on of the war. It is for that reason that I should favor at all costs the continuation of that unity, even if it now meant the introduction of conscription, provided that conscription were required for the purpose of securing the necessary number of suitable men. But as things stand at present, it is admitted on all sides that the Bill "dealing with military service" to be brought in by the Prime Minister is not really a Bill for that purpose. Under these circumstances, even if public criticism divides the nation, and even if that considerable opposition which is certain to be forthcoming in the House of Commons at first produces a bad effect abroad, these disadvantages will be more than counterbalanced by criticism and by opposition which may greatly minimize the internal dangers of a situation into which we are being rushed, not by those who honestly fear we are short of men, but by a section of the Press which is anxious to secure conscription for conscription's sake, and, sooner or later, to remove from office even such national patriots as Lord Kitchener.

That the Government is really actuated by a desire for economy—a desire which is highly praiseworthy, provided it be not carried out at an unfair cost to one section of the community—and that it is ignoring all racial considerations, is clearly proved by the fact that marriages contracted since August are reported not to be about to be considered as marriages from an enlistment standpoint, and that these newly-married men, whose wives often cannot even act as wage-winners, are to be deprived of their husbands at a time when they are most required at home.

Ignoring all other considerations, this cry for unmarried men constitutes a very bad example to the employers of labor as a whole. It means that, in the future, any employer, desirous of so doing, would be entitled to effect economy by refusing to employ married men. By so doing, if his employees be numerous, he would save large sums every

year either in direct compensation or in insurance to cover compensation, and this because his obligations under the Workmen's Compensation Acts are always considerable in case of the death of a married man, whilst those obligations are often non-existent in the case of an unmarried one.

If compulsion were required for military reasons at all, it should be directed not in a way to place an unfair burden upon one class of men, but with the purpose of securing the best human material with which to win the war as rapidly as possible. By adopting the single man principle, we shall not get this material, for it now seems to be suggested that a single man, who is approaching the age limit of forty-one, and who is certainly not of an age to become a really efficient soldier, is to be conscripted and even actually to be called up before a married man who is twenty years his junior.

The whole question now largely depends upon three things, and it is therefore mainly towards these things, or those connected with them, that we should turn our attention:—

(1) The age to which single men are to be conscripted and compulsorily put into the Derby groups, and the order in which those groups are to be called up. When the Prime Minister accepted the pledge to married men, set out in a letter from Lord Derby on November 19th, the adjective "young" was applied to the unmarried men who were to be attested voluntarily and compulsorily before the married were called out. Now it must be clear to everybody that no man can be called young when he has reached anything approaching the age of forty. When the same qualification is applied to the unmarried, it must obviously depict those who are even younger than when it is used in reference to men in general, and this because it qualifies the age of men in only one stage, and not in all the stages of his life.

Writing as a man who knows the full and broader meaning of the words "an old soldier," I consider that in a country where the people are not educated up to the idea of compulsion, men of, say, over thirty years of age (enlistment ends at twenty-six in peace time), who have never been disciplined in their youth, who have already learnt the tricks of the trade of life, and who will be practically as "slim" as the "old soldier," would be more valuable by their absence from, than by their presence with, the colors. In any case, if we are to have compulsion foisted upon us with the excuse that it is only to bring in the young unmarried "slackers" and shirkers, it should not be so extended as to include the compulsion of men of mature age, and if compulsion is to be based upon the group system at all, regulations must be made for calling up those groups, not upon the unmarried and the married principle, but practically upon a basis of the ages of the men concerned. This will ensure the provision of men of the best military age, which is not beyond that of thirty at most.

(2) The question of exemptions from service, and particularly the manner in which these exemptions are to be secured. Whilst the Bill will obviously contain a clause enabling some form of established authority to grant exemptions in cases which cannot always be foreseen, it is of the utmost importance that all the more important exemptions should be defined by the Act of Parliament itself. For it to be otherwise would mean that countless thousands of men would probably be called upon to attest, and afterwards to put in claims for exemption from, or postponement of, their service. Such a plan would carry with it enormous useless expenditure; but, what is far worse, it would entail loss of time, energy, and working power on the part of the attested men, who would be compelled to go through formalities, many of which they would not understand. For instance, as nobody could describe men who had already done periods of service in the regular army, navy, or marines as "shirkers" or as "slackers," it would be absurd to contend that such men, who have already borne their share of the burden of defending the country, should be compelled to attest or to re-enlist. The only object of wholesale attestations would be that it would increase the numbers of men liable at any moment to be put under military law, and it would enable the Government to utilize these men for purposes other than the defence of the country.

(3) The composition and the work of the tribunals. Lord Derby correctly says in his report that the system of submitting cases to tribunals "is viewed with some distrust." This is an extremely moderate way of describing

the situation, for in every country district and small town these tribunals are regarded with the greatest suspicion.

In concluding this somewhat long letter, I would once again affirm that in peace time I was in favor of some form of universal compulsory training. But to change the whole life and thought of the country during war, and by a very unfair Bill, is as dangerous from a military as from a political point of view.—Yours, &c.,

STRATEGIST.

January 4th, 1916.

#### SHAKESPEARE'S LEGAL VOCABULARY.

*To the Editor of THE NATION.*

SIR,—As Mr. J. M. Robertson, in your issue of Saturday last, makes particular reference to me, and as his book, "The Baconian Heresy," seems to be mainly directed against my humble self, though I do not happen to be a "Baconian," perhaps you will kindly allow me to say a word upon the matter about which he writes.

Lord Campbell, in his book on "Shakespeare's Legal Acquirements," quotes from "The Merry Wives of Windsor" the following words spoken by Mrs. Page: "If the devil have him not in fee-simple with fine and recovery, he will never, I think, in the way of waste, attempt us again"; where there is not only an allusion to the strongest title which a man could possess, viz., fee-simple assured by both fine and recovery, but also a covert reference to the old procedure by Writ of Waste.

As a parallel to this, Mr. Robertson (p. 41) quotes the following from Greene's story, "The Card of Fancy": "Yet, madame (quoth he), when the debt is confess there remaineth some hope of recovery. . . . The debt being due, he shall by constraint of law and his own confession (maugre his face) be forced to make restitution."

"Truly, Garydonius (quoth she), if he commence his action in a right case, and the plea he puts in prove not imperfect. But yet take this by the way, it is hard for the plaintiff to recover his costs where the defendant, being judge, sets down the sentence."

Now, sir, when I read this I certainly thought, as your reviewer thought, and, as I opine, every other reader must have thought, that the word "recovery" in the above passage was meant to be taken as a parallel to the same word as used by Shakespeare in "The Merry Wives." For what else is there in the quotation to suggest "the recondite terms of the law"? Mr. Robertson, however, now says that this is "sheer hallucination." He tells us that the passage from Greene was only "cited as showing 'another lady' talking in the legal vein which Campbell declared to be proof of the author's 'legal acquirements' when put in a woman's dialogue by Shakespeare."

Well, then, just noting before we pass on that it is not a "lady" but a man who is "talking" in the first half of the quotation, let us turn to another example of the use by Shakespeare of the words "fine and recovery," as cited by Lord Campbell, and Mr. Robertson's comment thereon.

In the "Comedy of Errors" (II. 2, 75) we read "May he not do it by fine and recovery?" What says Mr. Robertson as to this? "'Fine,' as it happens, is a common figure in the drama of Shakespeare's day. Bellafront, in Dekker's 'Honest Whore,' speaks of:—

an easy fine,  
For which, methought, I leased away my soul.

From Mall, in Porter's "Two Angry Women of Abingdon," we have:—

Francis, my love's lease I do let to thee  
Date of my life and time: What say'st thou to me?  
The ent'rening fine, or income thou must pay."

Mr. Robertson's comment on this is, "There is nothing more technical in the 'Comedy of Errors'" (p. 46).

Now, no lawyer needs to be told that the word "fine," as used in the expression "fine and recovery," means an obsolete method of transferring land by means of a fictitious action. It was "finis et consummatio omnium placitorum" (18 Edw. I.), and has nothing whatever to do with a money payment. Yet, as parallel with this technical legal term, as used by Shakespeare, Mr. Robertson, in order to show what "a common figure" the term is "in the drama of

Shakespeare's day," cites two passages where the word is used in its ordinary meaning of a payment of money, as in the case of a premium on a lease. Whatever may be the value of Lord Campbell's book, he at least spoke truly when he said, "It is a dangerous thing for a layman to tamper with our freemasonry!"—Yours, &c.,

G. G. GREENWOOD.

House of Commons, January 3rd, 1916.

#### ENGLAND AND GERMANY.

*To the Editor of THE NATION.*

SIR,—Having just returned from Serbia, via Berlin, I have one great wish, the desire to bring home to my own country the things that I have seen with my own eyes and the truths that I have personally realized.

After the South African War I was a doctor in Canada for ten years, and when, during the second year of this war, the call came from Serbia for doctors, I was one of those responding, and was stationed by the Serbian Government as Medical Officer of Health for Batochina and district, where I was in residence at the time of the German invasion in October, and was with my wounded men when the German Army entered Northern Serbia, and saw the whole campaign.

Contrary to all my expectations, the conduct of the German army was excellent in every respect. The men entered no occupied house without permission of the owner, they took nothing without payment or a requisition paper. Never did I ask a German soldier in vain for half of his bread for a wounded Serbian soldier. Generally it was all given to me, and I cut the portion and returned half.

After I had been for some weeks with the German Red Cross doctors, and began to realize how wrong an impression all in England had concerning our enemies, I decided to ask permission to go to Germany and see for myself whether equally wrong ideas existed concerning the treatment of British prisoners in the detention camps. This permission was accorded to me, and I went to Berlin, where I waited a fortnight while the War Office decided upon the matter. I was then given a long list of camps to choose from, and permitted to go with an official to inspect and report upon the same.

In this short letter I can only say that I was justified in my belief that all was well with our men, and, as a fine Canadian sergeant at Giessen said to me (whose regiment I had seen march out of Vancouver a year ago), "If a man behaves himself he will have nothing to complain of."

Now to my sorrow I am forced to confess that the nations do not yet incline towards peace, and to my regret I have to state, as the result of my observations, that Germany's resources at the present drain are far from being near exhaustion. Also there is no lack of food, and one may also say of luxuries, in the land.

The object of this letter is not to encourage a premature peace, which would be ultimately worse than war, but to plead for a fairer treatment of our foe. Let the truth and the truth only be known. "Let us fight if we must fight—but not with lies."

No one, in time of peace, respects the British press more than I do. It is the greatest power in the land. And let me to-day appeal to that mighty influence for weal or for woe, according to whether it decides wisely or not, to play the game fairly, and let the same spirit prevail that we have in our great public schools, "Win if you can—but only by fair play."—Yours, &c.,

ELLA SCARLETT-SYNGE, M.D., D.P.H.

Hyde Park Hotel, Knightsbridge, London, S.W.

January 3rd, 1916.

[We think it right to print Dr. Scarlett-Synges letter, as giving a different account of the treatment of British prisoners from that which has been put forward by other witnesses.—ED., THE NATION.]

#### APPROACHES TO PEACE.

*To the Editor of THE NATION.*

SIR,—In your last issue you have two very interesting Notes on Herr Ballin's contribution to the Christmas Number of the "Vossische Zeitung." Having remarked that "he is a close friend and political ally of the Kaiser," you say that he insists that the "supreme task" of the negotiators of the settlement must be "to exterminate not only war itself, which has destroyed whole generations, but also the fever

of armaments." And you add: "If we might suppose that this is the voice of the Kaiser, and is a sincere utterance, the German outlook would be somewhat changed." And again: "If this is the mood of exalted circles in Germany, and is intended to bear fruit, we shall, we suppose, see it expressed more definitely." Would not this further definition be more likely to come if some Englishman of equal authority with Herr Ballin were to respond to this German suggestions; not necessarily accepting them, perhaps demurring to some and expanding others, but honestly endeavoring to find a common denominator? Would it not be tragical that the belligerent nations should maintain a war of extermination when all are ready for a word that should stop this process of exhaustion?—Yours, &c.,

KATE COURTNEY OF PENWITH.

15, Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, S.W.,  
January 3rd, 1916.

*To the Editor of THE NATION.*

SIR,—May an Irishman in Canada, who has just seen the correspondence in THE NATION initiated by the letters of Mr. J. A. Hobson and Dr. Horton plead that fact as an excuse for taking a belated part in the controversy? I write as one in profound sympathy with the general Liberal and democratic attitude of THE NATION, and, indeed, with that of Mr. Hobson and Dr. Horton. I opposed the South African War—and were the circumstances to recur would do so again. As an Irish Nationalist, I am not likely to be blind to the faults of English policy in the past; and as a democrat I hate and abhor Jingoism, whether it wears a Prussian or a British livery. I would as lief be ruled by General von Bernhardi as, let us say, by Lord Milner. But the arguments of those who contemplate peace proposals, at this stage, or at any time, until Germany and her partners are clearly beaten, and know that they are, leave me entirely unconvinced. May I say why?

My first argument shall be a series of quotations:—

1. "The German people are drunk with victory."—(Herr Bebel).  
"The prospect of a new war . . . is entertained without emotion; the profits are calculated."—(Herr Alfred Kerr to M. G. Bourdon, "The German Enigma," p. 166).
2. "Anyone who has any familiarity at all with our officers and generals knows that it would take another Sedan inflicted on us, instead of by us, before they would acquiesce in the control of the Army by the German Parliament."—(Professor Delbrück, "Government and the Popular Will," p. 136).
3. "I wonder that in view of their military failures and diplomatic defeats the Allies have not begun to talk of peace."—(Chancellor von Bethmann-Hollweg in the Reichstag).

No. 1 shows the disease, the *virus* of which impelled Germany to commit a gigantic crime.

No. 2 indicates the only remedy.

No. 3 proves clearly that the remedy has not yet been adequately applied.

And all the quotations are from Germans. Plain as the inference is, it may yet be clinched in a phrase of the French writer, M. Vergnet: "Victory has dowered the German Empire with military pride." For that disease there is one remedy—defeat, pure and simple. My second point is that history shows that defeat is a remedy. Defeat in the American War of Independence taught Great Britain a lesson in Colonial policy, which has never been forgotten. The attitude to-day of General Botha and Sir Wilfrid Laurier is but one proof of the wisdom learned then, and never since entirely or permanently discarded. What remedy but defeat, complete and unmistakable, could have cured Napoleonic aggression? And yet Napoleonism was a less loathsome and a less dangerous thing than what we are up against (pardon the Canadianism!) to-day. That contained elements of democracy; this is military oligarchy pure and undefiled. Contrast "la carrière ouverte aux talents," with the fatuous sentence in that most remarkable effusion ever addressed to a democratic nation, "The Truth About Germany," "We select only gentlemen as officers." Napoleonism, besides, depended on the life of one man, and would have died with him. But we are fighting a machine; and a machine is immortal until it is smashed.

It is not defeat but dismemberment, the forcible

transfer of populations against their will, that breeds bitterness and fresh wars. Russia and England defeated France in 1814 and 1815; France and England defeated Russia in 1856; to-day the three are Allies. It was not defeat by Germany, but the taking of Alsace-Lorraine that permanently embittered the relations of France with Germany. Mr. Gladstone's words to Lord Granville were prophetic: "I have an apprehension that this violent laceration and transfer is to lead us from bad to worse, and to be the beginning of a new series of European complications." (Morley's "Life," Bk. VI., Chap. VI.) But no sane man proposes to-day to take from Germany territory inhabited by people who wish to remain German.

This leads to my third point, which is simply that the Allies have no right to let slip the opportunity which Destiny (or, as some would prefer to say, Providence) has put into their hands, of remaking the map of Europe, Mazzini's "first essential step of all." Alsace-Lorraine, trisected Poland, the Armenians and other Christians under Turkish domination, cry for settlement, and Liberals are the last who should be deaf to their cry. But is any settlement possible until Germany is defeated? Would Germany give up Alsace-Lorraine, or Posen, or Danish Schleswig, or Turkey loose her hold on Armenia, till they are compelled to do so?

Fourthly, the sin against civilization involved in the whole action of Germany, but especially in the violation and brutal treatment of Belgium, is such, that if it goes unpunished it will break down and utterly destroy whatever of moral obligation between nations had been slowly built up. It is surely absurd to say that the aggressors have been sufficiently punished by their losses in war, seeing that the innocent victims and the Allies in general have suffered far more. Germany, save for a temporary raid on East Prussia, has been free from the worst horror of war, invasion. It is Belgium, and France, and Russia, and Serbia that have been the chief sufferers. I am far from saying that the Allies ought to retaliate in kind on Germany. I do not know that even invasion of Germany will be necessary. If she is forcibly driven out of the occupied territory, it will be a proof of defeat too clear for her military caste to explain away. What I am insisting on is simply that peace now, on the basis of *status quo*, would leave Germany comparatively scathless, and would be a clear failure of justice, and an open invitation to nations to act as she has acted.

Finally, if the victory of Germany would mean the death of everything for which Liberals care, a draw would be little better. Social reforms would be lost sight of in the race for increased armaments, and conscription would be inevitable, so long as Europe is confronted by an unrepentant and unbroken Prussian military oligarchy.—Yours, &c.,

J. O. MURRAY

Winnipeg, December 16th, 1915.

## Poetry.

### FROM THE PORTUGUESE.

CARA MIA, what rare tree  
Bore this argent rose  
That doth now so joyfully  
On thy heart repose?  
*Lord, this rose is my faith in thee.*

Ma donna, what faery wave  
Carved this tourmaline?  
Thine eyes alone have skill to grave  
So bright a gem, I ween!  
*Lord, this tourmaline is my trust in thee.*

Darling, from what minstrelsy  
Came this tuneful song,  
That of late so merrily  
Thou singest all day long?  
*Lord, this song is my confidence in thee.*

EDITH ANNE STEWART.

## The World of Books.

THE "NATION" OFFICE, THURSDAY NIGHT.

THE following is our weekly selection of books which we commend to the notice of our readers:—

- "The Civilization of Babylonia and Assyria." By Maurice Jastrow. (Lippincott. 25s. net.)
- "G. K. Chesterton: A Critical Study." By Julius West. (Secker. 7s. 6d. net.)
- "Nelson's History of the War." Vol. IX. By John Buchan. (Nelson. 1s. net.)
- "Father Stanton's Last Sermons." Edited by E. F. Russell. (Hodder & Stoughton. 5s. net.)
- "Pelle the Conqueror: The Great Struggle." By M. A. Nexo. (Sidgwick & Jackson. 6s.)

\* \* \*

CONSIDERING the place that conversation holds in life, it is surprising that it has received so little attention in the world of books. We possess, it is true, a treatise on "The Art of Conversation" from the pen of an Irish professor whose fame as a talker is European. And from time to time our periodical essayists write disquisitions on the subject, usually in the form of a lament for what they describe as a lost art. But the "literature" of conversation is, upon the whole, meagre and disappointing. It was, therefore, with some expectation that I took up a little book published by Messrs. Putnam, which bears the title, "The Happy Phrase: A Hand-Book of Expression for the Enrichment of Conversation, Writing, and Public Speaking." Mr. Edwin Hamlin Carr, who has compiled the volume, explains that for years it has been his habit to collect phrases from all sources, and that his aim has been to arrange them in such a way that the reader may get a synonymous phrase as, in a book of synonyms, he gets a synonymous word. Oddly enough, two of the most fruitful of Mr. Carr's sources have been the novels of Alexandre Dumas and the correspondence of Mrs. Hannah More—two writers who have little enough in common.

\* \* \*

NEVERTHELESS, with their aid and that of a number of other writers whom he mentions, Mr. Carr has made a collection of conversational openings which, like a pawn's move at the beginning of a game of chess, do not usually commit one to any great extent. Mr. Carr's ambition, indeed, goes further than that of helping the mere talker. He has also an eye upon clergymen and other public speakers. "The clergyman," he says, "who begins his every observation with 'It seems to me,' and continues 'Along that line,' will find here a variety of prefatory and introductory phrases." It would seem, then, that anyone who had the patience to learn Mr. Carr's one hundred and sixty pages by heart, would be armed at every point for the battle of talk. And yet, in spite of Mr. Carr's industry, I have my doubts whether this would be a good plan. Take his first three phrases for conversation. They appear under the heading "Complimentary of Things," and are "How delightfully cosy," "This is the sort of thing I enjoy," and "I like the idea very much." I feel, without boasting, that I might have thought of something as good as these, even without priming myself beforehand from Mr. Carr's manual. I fancy, too, that "I am very happy to meet you," which appears under "Conventional—On Being Introduced," or "I wish you much joy" under "Conventional—At Weddings," might occur to one or two people who had not the benefit of Mr. Carr's guidance.

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WHEN Mr. Carr becomes critical, he shows more originality. The heading, "Critical of Persons," begins fairly well with "He is a rather crabbed specimen of humanity," and improves a few lines further on into "I would as soon take Beelzebub himself into my plans"—a conversational opening that might lead to a good game. For the enrichment of this section, "Critical of Persons," in a future edition of his book, I would command to Mr. Carr a phrase used by Daniel O'Connell in circumstances which Judge Parry relates in the current number of "Cornhill":

"O'Connell had a tolerably good tongue for inventing at the moment epithets of abuse that seemed to his hearers to fit the occasion. He was fighting a case against an attorney who constantly interrupted him with futile and

absurd objections, urged with considerable rudeness and pertinacity. O'Connell stood the annoyance for some time with more or less patience, and at length fastened him with a stern look and shouted at him in tones that reverberated through the Court House: 'Sit down, you snarling, pugnacious Ram Cat!'

"The attorney was quelled, the Court rocked with laughter, and the sobriquet remained with the unfortunate man for ever."

\* \* \*

MATTHEW ARNOLD found in poetry a criticism of life, and a careful reader would find in many of Mr. Carr's phrases a commentary on contemporary civilization. The first phrase given under the heading of "Inquiry," for example, is "What course shall you take to get your money?" while "Energy" opens with "An enthusiastic ardor," and winds up with "Intent on getting a comfortable livelihood." "Patriotic" starts with "The new patriotism," and "Political" with "An unworthy piece of legislation," followed immediately by "An odious piece of class legislation," thence through "Blind partisanship" and "Public apathy" to the concluding "We must set ourselves to hunt out helpful policies." "Sermon Phrases" begin with "The hollow shams and conventionalities of our day," and end with "Spiritual confusion." Sometimes Mr. Carr assumes that the users of his phrases will bring with them more detachment than is common. He includes both "Pernicious practices" and "Financial distress" in his list of "Happy Combinations"; his first phrase "Commentary of Persons" is "He is a perpetual surprise, even to those who know him best"; and his first "Tactful Response" is "Now, as they say, you are asking me a question."

\* \* \*

A FELLOW-COUNTRYMAN of Mr. Carr achieved some fame by dividing mankind as talkers into two classes, "bromides" and "sulphides." There is a decided bromidian flavor about Mr. Carr's phrases, as well as a large proportion of clichés and common-places. It would be surprising were it otherwise, for tags and clichés are liberally interwoven into our daily speech. In many cases the origin of these phrases is completely forgotten, or they are attributed to those two great English sources, the Bible and Shakespeare. How many people know that when they use the phrase, "Through thick and thin," they are quoting Dryden, or that "Deeds, not words" is due, not to Miss Pankhurst and the W.S.P.U., but to Beaumont and Fletcher? Or that we owe "They order things better in France," "God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb," and "I saw the iron enter into his soul" to Laurence Sterne, that "most humorous and least exemplary of British parsons"? But the tracing of the sources of clichés demands endless time and encyclopedic knowledge.

\* \* \*

WE could do with a few more books on conversation, though not precisely of the sort that Mr. Carr has given us. Johnson, who knew something about the subject, laid down some guiding principles for good talk:—

"There must, in the first place, be knowledge, there must be materials;—in the second place, there must be a command of words;—in the third place, there must be imagination, to place things in such views as they are not commonly seen in;—and in the fourth place, there must be presence of mind, and a resolution that it is not to be overcome by failures; this last is an essential requisite; for want of it many people do not excel in conversation."

Johnson here lost sight of the need for give and take, for reply as well as assertion, if conversation is to be more than monologue. The soul of conversation is sympathy, says Hazlitt, and he adds: "Coleridge is the only person who can talk to all sorts of people, on all sorts of subjects, without caring a farthing for their understanding one word he says." Yet it was Hazlitt who held the frightful opinion that authors should converse chiefly with authors, and their talk should be of books. This would be sure to lead to disaster. There is a story of two famous authors who began a conversation in the presence of a Frenchman. One of them embarked upon a long monologue, while the other held his breath, waiting for a chance to break in. The Frenchman gazed at both in admiration, and then whispered: "S'il tousse, il est perdu."

PENGUIN.

## Reviews.

### AN UNROOFING OF LIFE.

"Spoon River Anthology." By EDGAR LEE MASTERS.  
(Werner Laurie. 6s. net.)

THE "Spoon River Anthology" is the most remarkable product of America since Whitman first published his unnoticed "Leaves of Grass." Like Whitman's work, it is neither prose nor poetry. Like Whitman's also, this fact is irrelevant. The author is not feeling after embellishment of language, but after the facts of reality. It is the facts of reality which he gives you. The main difference between the two is that while Whitman is almost "Gott getrunken" in "forever corroborating the praising of things," Mr. Masters sees a different world in America—the world of which Whitman prophesied, at the end: and as, by his method, the members of this world, stripped of illusion, talk the truth, the result is not wholly encouraging.

The people of Spoon River here lie "all, all, sleeping on the hill"—in the cemetery of the "little one-horse town" which is typical of all that is developing in the Middle West of America. They tell the truth. In some cases this truth coincides with the record of their lives: in most, otherwise. "Il fault parler françois," said Montaigne about death. They "speak French" in the cemetery of Spoon River. There are no great heroes. There are few unspeakable criminals. Most are men and women who have refused to face life, or those whom life has terrified out of unknown possibilities, or who have settled down into acquiescence in a pretty sordid, substantial, semi-successful life: as in the suburbs of all cities, as in the gigantic suburb which makes up America. Here are evil and good alike, the hypocrite, the adulterer, the man who called public swindle a public service, and induced all his neighbors to believe it. They have their queer standard of Puritanism, money-making, and what they are pleased to call the "moral law"—"Republicans, Calvinists, Merchants, Bankers"—which warps and twists hereditary, ill-comprehended emotions and passions, and searchings after sacrifice for ideal ends. They have been driven by the furnace machine of time through the "so little" in their little lives; and now, silent forever, proclaim to the world the thing they found life was.

"Lift not the painted veil that men called life," cried Shelley, and described something of the revelation behind. Mr. Masters has lifted the "painted veil," with no optimistic results. He shows the selling of the franchises by the "good citizen" politicians, the frauds of the bankers, the pursuit of "non-justice" by the lawyers. He shows young love too much or too little satisfied. The rogue triumphs in his villainy, mocking his unsuccessful opponents, from the cemetery dust. Only occasionally one who wishes to know what life is, or one who has tried to ennoble life, or one who in some mystic fashion has realized that there is an existence which Spoon River and all Spoon Rivers cannot altogether torture and tear to pieces, protests from the grave that things might have been better, that things shall be better. In the main they rest under tablets and tombs grotesquely undescriptive of their virtues or follies—hurried through a life feeble and transitory, into the eternal darkness of the grave.

The strength of the book is its indifference; its impartiality; its tolerance; its refusal to label sheep and goats; its determination that their man and woman shall tell their own story, confess their own crime and conviction, assert without approval or blame. The author knows that the truth is never known, or never told, unless the dead can speak—speak when "far too naked to be 'shamed.'" So their speeches are recorded with something of the indifference of the stonemason himself who from the grave affirms his method of constructing the graves ordered "as per contract." When he first came to Spoon River, he "did not know whether what they told me was true or false," and they would stand round where he worked and say—

"'He was so kind.' 'He was wonderful.'  
'She was the sweetest woman.' 'He was a consistent Christian.'  
And I chiseled for them whatever they wished,  
All in ignorance of its truth.  
But, later, as I lived among the people here  
I knew how near to the life

Were the epitaphs that were ordered for them as they died.  
But still I chiseled whatever they paid me to chisel  
And made myself a party to the false chronicles  
Of the stones.

Even as the historian does who writes  
Without knowing the truth  
Or because he is influenced to hide it."

Sometimes the "chiselling" produces savage satisfaction and contempt, as that of the politician who "looked like Abraham Lincoln," stood for the rights of property and for order, a regular church attendant, denounced discontent among the poor, was elected as a legislator, and prevented raids upon railways:—

"Moving quietly through the world, rich and courted,  
Dying, of course, but lying here  
Under a stone with an open book carved upon it  
And the words 'Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.'  
And now you world-savers, who reaped nothing in life  
And in death have neither stones nor epitaphs,  
How do you like your silence from mouths stopped  
With the dust of my triumphant career?"

But there are some to whom the irony of the inscription (and the reputation of the inscription) increases even the bitterness of the grave; as one on whose stone they chiselled "His life was gentle, and the elements so mixed in him that Nature might stand up and say, 'This was a man.'" "Those who know me, smile" he says:—

"My epitaph should have been  
'Life was not gentle to him,  
And the elements so mixed in him  
That he made warfare on life,  
In the which he was slain':  
While I lived I could not cope with slanderous tongues.  
Now that I am dead I must submit to an epitaph  
Graven by a fool."

It is, however, the irony of contrast that Mr. Masters chiefly delights in. As, for example, the aspiration of the old schoolmistress "Emily Sparks," wondering "Where is my boy," "The boy I loved best in all the world," and praying—

"My boy, wherever you are,  
Work for your soul's sake,  
That all the clay of you, all of the dross of you,  
May yield to the fire of you,  
Till the fire is nothing but light!—  
Nothing but light!"

While the boy, having endured and enjoyed "every peril known of wine and women and the joy of life," suddenly remembers with tears his old mistress—tears assumed to be amorous tears by the black-eyed cocotte in a room in the Rue de Rivoli, with whom he is dining. Or there is the contrast—the soldier carried away by the recruiting enthusiasm, passing to the war in the Philippines, enduring unspeakable things, and after "days of loathing and nights of fear," falling with a scream "shot through the guts"; over whose grave they carve, as he remarks bitterly, "A flag! A flag!" contrasted with his friend who envies him his straightforward death, while he himself was destined to continually battle with cowardice, and treachery, and maintain ineffectual ideals:—

"You were not wounded by the greatness of a dream,  
You were not torn by aching nerves  
Nor did you carry great wounds to your old age.  
You were not rejected  
By those for whom you were defeated.  
You did not eat the savorless bread  
Which a poor alchemy had made from ideals.  
You went to Manila, Harry Wilmans,  
While I enlisted in the bedraggled army  
Who surged forward, who were driven back, and fell  
Sick, broken, crying, shorn of faith,  
Following the flag of the Kingdom of Heaven."

Or, again, here is the man who died because his children were talented and grew up to despise him, contrasted with the man who wondered at his death, and who would have gladly lived, "If even one of my boys could run a newsstand, or one of my girls could have married a decent man." The doctor who is worshipped by the poor is killed owing to a charge of procuring abortion to save a girl who is outraged by a ruffian; a girl whose sole cry is "I thirsted so for love: I hungered so for life." And the doctor's wife approves his death, acquiescing in the Divine command, "Love God and keep his Commandments." One man flees from his wife. "She loved me! O how she loved me. I never had a chance

to escape," he protests. He invents a grotesque story that he has been kidnapped by pirates on Lake Michigan: returns after years, hoping release has come. His wife refuses to release him, pretending to believe the story, "cried and kissed him, said it was cruel, outrageous": all the while knowing that he lied. "I then concluded," he grimly remarks—

"our marriage  
Was a divine dispensation,  
And could not be dissolved  
Except by death.  
I was right."

"Mad at the crooked police and the crooked game of life," one harlot gives herself up to justice. Another, after many adventures, finds herself buried at Genoa in the Campo Santo, near which Columbus—young Columbus—dreamt of discovering America—which made Spoon River—on her grave "*Contessa Navigato Implora eterna quiete.*"

Mr. Masters tears and hacks at the very blood and bones of humanity as it is. He sees life as a monstrous ogre—with a giant hand laying traps and laughing when the trap closes, and ending you "when your misery bores him." "In the morning of soul," says Spoon River, "I knew aspiration, I saw glory." By middle age it is pursuing sex or success. In old age it is repenting rejected temptations or regretting lost opportunities. Only the fiddler, who has abandoned his property and ended with a broken fiddle, and a broken laugh, and a thousand memories and not a single regret, can protest the excellence of it all. The village blasphemer, who had been "beaten to death by a Catholic guard," can only surmise as a clue to the meaning, "The reason I believe God crucified His own Son, to get out of the wretched tangle is, because it sounds just like Him." The lawyers (and lawyers and bankers come specially under the fierce diagnosis of the writer) are estimated in examples of their lives: the judge "deciding cases on the points the lawyers scored, not on the rights of the matter," and after the end confessing himself a worse villain than the men he hanged: the attorney, paid by the great companies to swindle the widows and orphans:—

"I was attorney for the 'Q,'  
And the indemnity company which insured  
The owners of the mine.  
I pulled the wires with judge and jury  
And the upper Courts, to beat the claims  
Of the crippled, the widow and orphan,  
And made a fortune thereat.  
The Bar Association sang my praises  
In a high-flown resolution,  
And the floral tributes were many—  
But the rats devoured my heart  
And a snake made a nest in my skull."

This bitterness does not do full justice to Mr. Masters's work, for he has depicted character and scenes of extraordinary beauty, the death of "Pauline Barrett," the child wondering if the children still wandered in and enjoyed the blue autumn evenings, the "Pioneers" taking the Sacrament, with the "Coming of the Comforter, and the consolation of tongues of flame." But normally his attitude is that of one who "prayed for another birth in the world, with all of Spoon River rooted out of my soul." And Spoon River is not merely a Yankee hamlet, but a condition and state of being which extends through all that which man is pleased to call civilization. The appeal is a universal, and not a limited appeal. And this astonishing, ruthless analysis of the life which there festers, aspires, and dies, is one of the greatest books of the present century.

C. F. G. M.

#### THE GOSPEL OF RACE.

"The Inequality of Human Races." By ARTHUR DE GOBINEAU. Translated by ADRIAN COLLINS. (Heinemann. 5s. net.)

M. DE GOBINEAU's book is recommended to us in a brief preface by Dr. Oscar Levy, as a prophecy of disaster which has been justified by the event. There are false and true prophets in Dr. Levy's opinion, namely, prophets of smooth things and prophets of rough things. "In the world to-day, as well as in Palestine of old, the prophets of bliss are the

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false prophets; the prophets of evil, to-day as of yore, are the true ones. Such a true prophet was Count Arthur de Gobineau." We are to regard Gobineau apparently as a precursor, in part of Nietzsche in his disbelief in the morality of Christendom, in part of Herr Chamberlain in his apostleship of the Germanic race. Only, Herr Chamberlain and others, according to Dr. Levy, rather diluted the pure milk of the word, or perhaps we should say, rather sweetened the sour vinegar of the word by the enthusiasm of their cult for one particular race out of many.

"Stern old Gobineau knew the world better than his young and cheerful offspring. He had seen through all that boisterous gaiety of the age, all its breathless labor, all its technical advancement, all its materialistic progress, and had diagnosed, behind it, that muddle of moral values which our forefathers have bequeathed to us, and which in our generation has only become a greater muddle still. The catastrophe which Gobineau had prophesied to an Aristocracy which had forgotten its tradition, to a Democracy which had no root in reality, to a Christianity which he thought entirely inefficient, is now upon us."

The reader will be prepared by all this for a good deal of pessimism of a type which is familiar enough in the kind of sociological writing which is based upon biological ideas. Those who treat man primarily as an animal naturally dislike the more distinctively human elements in civilization and disparage its achievement. Whatever any community does accomplish they ascribe to inherent virtues of a physical order, namely, to what they are pleased to call racial characteristics. Their method is to select some one race, normally their own, as the type of all superiority, and whenever they are faced by the achievement of some other people, if they cannot disparage it, to ascribe it at once to a mixture of blood. This is the method pursued by Herr Chamberlain, who waters the plains of Italy with German blood in order to explain the Renaissance, and even besprinkles Palestine with enough of the same mixture to account for the achievements of Christianity. The same method is followed by Gobineau, who, when he has to admit that Mongolian races as well as Aryan have evolved a civilization, explains it away by assuming an Aryan admixture with the Mongolian stock. Thus for him the Chinese civilization was founded by an Aryan colony from India. Even ancient Egypt owes its civilization to the same source. No evidence worth considering is produced for these statements, but they are necessary as burnt offerings to the God of race. After all, granted, for the sake of argument, that races are fundamentally unequal, and that only one among the number is capable of evolving an independent civilization, is the achievement of much value in Gobineau's opinion? Occasionally, Gobineau seems to think our civilization higher than others, but many a page of the kind of jeremiad that is now familiar leaves us in considerable doubt whether the results of that racial superiority, which he so insists upon, are worth considering at all. In one place he compares humanity as a whole rather unfavorably with a community of intelligent ants, and asks himself:—

"Whether the instinct of the animals, restricted as it is to a small circle of wants, does not really make them happier than the faculty of reason which has left our poor humanity naked on the earth, and a thousand times more exposed than any other species to the sufferings caused by the united agency of air, sun, rain, and snow?"

"Man unlearns as fast as he learns. . . . The human mind is always in motion. It runs from one point to another, but cannot be in all places at once. It exalts what it embraces, and forgets what it has abandoned. Held prisoner for ever within a circle, whose bounds it may not overstep, it never manages to cultivate one part of its domain without leaving the others fallow. It is always at the same time superior and inferior to its forbears. Mankind never goes beyond itself, and so is not capable of infinite progress."

Gobineau is in fact one of a long series of prophets whose predictions have, it must be admitted, in some measure come true; but, like other prophets in the same case, is not this largely due to the influence of the prophets themselves? The persistent preaching of fundamental inequality, with all the incense that it brought to the collective egoism of nations, the reiterated disparagement of the humbler elements in civilization, the gloomy outlook

upon human life, the refusal to credit man with the possibility of greater achievement, the contempt for religion and justice as elements in social organization—all these things, repeated from mouth to mouth through two generations, have had their cumulative effect. They have done something to persuade men that moral restraints are unworthy of the regard of a strong man or a progressive people, that success justifies violence, and that contempt for others is a proof of merit. This stream of thought has by degrees gathered strength, and has had its effect, not only in the world of ideas, but in the actions of mankind and the behavior of States. As a contribution to science we should not have thought that Gobineau's book, written as it was in 1853, would be worth reprinting at the present time; but as a link in the chain of names leading us away from the humanitarian progress of the mid-nineteenth century to the chaos of the present day, the volume deserves a passing attention.

L. T. H.

#### A METHODICAL NOVEL.

"The Genius." By THEODORE DREISER. (Lane. 6s.)

ONE is grateful, with reservations, to Mr. Dreiser for another of his colossal encyclopedic novels on American life. Like "The Financier" and "The Titan," the story is packed with exact information, and surveys an extraordinary variety of social activities in the maelstrom of the big American cities. The most intrepid reader is quickly engulfed in the torrent, loses all sense of direction, and is dragged willy-nilly into a human Niagara. One must protest, indeed against the superabundant weight of details and the formlessness of the author's method, as well as with his wearisome obsession with problems of sex.

And yet the story of Eugene Witla's upward progress is undeniably interesting. The boy, who is the son of a small dealer in sewing-machines in a provincial city, is quick-witted and adaptable, with an ardent and sensuous temperament. This makes him attractive to all the women he encounters; but his fickleness causes perpetual misery to poor Angela, his schoolmate and first love, whom he, by-and-by, marries. Eugene goes to Chicago, and distinguishes himself first at the art school, and then as a magazine illustrator. Book I. is a mixed salad, chronicling Eugene's lively education, his passing friendships and youthful passions for Miriam French, the clever woman sculptor, and Christina, the emancipated girl. Then follows a description of Angela's country upbringing on her father's farm at Blue Homestead, her courtship and seduction, her distress, Eugene's remorse, and finally the marriage and honeymoon of the couple.

Book II. (The Struggle) carries on the story of Eugene's worldly progress and the discovery of his "genius" by the astute art dealer, M. Charles, with the exhibition of his paintings of New York street life and their cautious acclamation by New York Society. But Art in the States is the trembling handmaid of Commerce, and Eugene's pictures of Paris, to which city he migrates for a period, fall flat, and, after his illness and nervous breakdown, his patrons turn their backs on him. The "genius" is reduced indeed to taking a job with a gang of railroad mechanics at Mott Haven, where he recovers his health.

Book III. continues the chronicle of Eugene's brightening fortunes as artist and Art-Director till he obtains the powerful position of Managing-Publisher of the United Magazine Corporation at £5,000 a year. The higher Eugene reaches in the scale of prosperity the more concentrated in their terrible sharpness and shrewd coldness does he find these forceful "dynamic" business men whose gods are money, power, and luxury—the great Trinity of success. Naturally, it is not the hero's "genius" as an artist that makes him valuable to them, but his facility in prostituting his gifts to their designs. Thus after he has met the dynamic Mr. Daniel C. Summerfield, who aims at netting 200,000 dollars of profit over contracts for the international advertisements of the American Crystal Sugar Company and new French perfumes, Eugene sets to work to produce sketches of "small white hands holding gold and silver sugar-tongs and sparkling lumps of sugar over blue coffee cups!" So brilliant are these "ideas for ads." that Mr. Summerfield fixes up for the artist an engagement at £1,000

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**PLEASE TURN  
TO PAGE 555**

FOR THE

Appeal of the War Victims' Relief Committee of the Society of Friends.

a year. But Eugene is lured away by the Kelvin Company and afterwards by the United Magazine Corporation, big affairs run by big men who are for ever swallowing up their little rivals. Eugene might, perhaps, have held his own with these "worth-while" people if he had not contracted two intimacies, one with Kenyon C. Winfield, President of the Long Island Reality Company, a gentleman who is a real estate plunger and a "financial artist"; and the second with the dazzlingly pretty Suzanne Dale, with her soul "exquisitely set in youth and beauty and maidenhood." In the last two hundred pages, which set forth the bitter struggle between Mrs. Dale and her iron-willed daughter, who tries to elope with Eugene, while he on his side is seeking to divorce Angela, is a novel in itself. The lovers' plan is defeated in the end by Eugene's irresolution, and by the alarmed mother's *finesse*. Mrs. Dale goes to the head of the United Magazine Corporation, and, by threatening to make a great scandal in the newspapers about Eugene, succeeds in getting him ejected from his post. Then she intrigues with Mr. Kenyon C. Winfield, with the result that Eugene is unable to realize his stock in the Blue Sea Corporation. So, under this financial pressure, Eugene realizes that he is in danger of complete social and commercial extinction. Moreover, Angela at this crisis dies in childbirth, after a death-bed reconciliation with the remorseful Eugene, who is sobered by the shock. In characteristic American fashion the novel ends with the hero's investigation into the claims of Christian Science and with his search for the basis of a sound metaphysic. Like most of his countrymen, he has had too big a dose of the Real.

We have said enough to show the value of "The Genius" as a sociological document. Future historians of America, when they essay to reconstruct a picture of this period, will prefer to consult Mr. Dreiser's novels to the great majority of his rival contemporaries, for he neither over-colors nor idealizes the human drama. He is inexorable in his exactitude. Could novels be written after impartial investigation based on the observation of innumerable facts set down without prejudice or passion by a group of patient literary scientists, the result, we fancy, would be a close parallel to Mr. Dreiser's exhaustive method. But there is an overplus of intelligence and too little temperamental force or beauty in "The Genius" for the novel to rank high as art.

### The Week in the City.

To judge from the Bank return, as well as from Mr. McKenna's statement in the House of Commons, there has been a good demand for Exchequer Bonds and Treasury Bills; for the Bank return shows a satisfactory increase of over eight millions in public deposits, in spite of the distribution of dividends. The gold reserve is only a trifle down, which must be considered highly satisfactory, in view of the steadiness of our exchanges and the continued depreciation of the exchange values of German and Austrian currency in neutral countries. On the Stock Exchange there has been less business, but with the price of rubber firm at 4s. 3d. per lb., rubber shares are still popular, while the market for bank shares is also good after the recent dividend announcements. The income-tax deductions are giving a good deal of trouble, and City interests are undoubtedly feeling the pressure of these high and increasing war rates. The difficulties of the printing industry and the high price of paper, which has nearly doubled in many cases, has caused something like a crisis, and the Federation of Master Printers has just issued an explanation of the need for

advancing prices owing to the shortage of labor. The calling up of attested men under the Derby scheme is, of course, making matters worse and worse. The Trade Union Congress and the conscription crisis in the House of Commons have diverted attention for the moment from war finance, but it is noted that the German Press is beginning to appreciate the financial embarrassments caused by the war. The German Exchanges are still falling, and the mark has depreciated another 5 per cent. since the New Year.

#### THE FIRST BANK DIVIDENDS.

The first dividend announcements of the leading Banks and Discount Houses are to hand this week, and are well up to expectation. The London South-Western has increased its rate, the other declarations being the same as a year ago, as is shown below:—

Bank.	Latest Declaration.	A Year Ago.	Latest Price and Dividend.	
			Per cent.	£ s. d.
London City and Midland	... 18	... 18	6 0 0	
London and South Western	... 17	... 16	6 0 0	
Union of London and Smith's	... 10	... 10	6 10 6	
Capital and Counties	... 14	... 14	6 1 9	
Provincial of Ireland	... 12½	... 12½	6 13 0	
Manchester and Liverpool District	17½	... 17½	6 1 0	
National Discount	... 10	... 10	7 15 3	
Halifax and District	... 15	... 15	—	
Alexanders & Co.	... 10	... 10	—	
			Per share.	Per share.
Manchester and County	... 5s. 4d.	... 5s. 4d.	6 9 0	
Palatine Bank	... 2s. 6d.	... 2s. 6d.	6 18 6	

There is every indication in the figures that have up to now been published that the circumstances of the past year of war have been not unprofitable for banking business. Much curiosity was felt as to how the directors of the various concerns would deal with the question of investment depreciation, this problem having been made more difficult by the recent removal of minimum prices. The London City and Midland devotes no less than £642,830 to this purpose, the Union of London and Smith's £150,000, and the London and South-Western £130,000. Judging from an announcement by the latter bank, it appears that the banks agreed to take War Loan into their balance-sheets at cost, and to write down other investments to the level of, or below the market quotation of December 31st, 1915. The City and Midland's carry-forward is reduced from £421,285 to £113,598. As we go to press other announcements appear, which I will deal with next week.

#### SMALL EXCHEQUER BONDS.

In accordance with the interim recommendations of the Committee of which Mr. Montagu is chairman, a scheme has been published this week which offers facilities for the purchase of Exchequer Bonds of £5, £10, and £50, denominations through the medium of the Post Office. Application forms may be obtained at any Money Order Office in the United Kingdom, and the operation of the scheme begins on Monday. The terms offered are exactly the same as those controlling the issue of the bonds of larger denomination. Each applicant at a Money Order Office will receive at once a receipt to be exchanged in due course for the bond. Post Office contributors' objection to a paper bond is met by the offer of the choice of leaving their bonds in custody of the Post Office and receiving instead an Exchequer deposit book recording the value and numbers of bonds purchased. Obviously, therefore, the new scheme contains attractions for the working classes that were absent from the War Loan scrip voucher plan. A definite prospect of a steady 5 per cent. and full money back in five years is a decided improvement both on the War Loan arrangements and on the proposals put forward by Mr. McKenna six weeks ago.

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